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Characters or Hiſtorical Anecdotes

OF ALL THE

Kings and Queens of England.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Characters or Hiſtorical Anecdotes

OF ALL THE

Kings and Queens of England,

From WILLIAM the Conqueror to the preſent Time,

IMPARTIALLY DELINEATED.

Extracted partly from BURNET, CLARENDON, RAPIN, SMOLLETT, HUME, MACAULEY, and other able Hiſtorians.

CALCULATED WITH A VIEW

To form the tender Minds of Youth, inſpire them with a laudable Emulation, improve their Morals, and give them a juſt Conception of human Nature, however dignified, or however diſguiſed by Pride, Avarice, Ambition, and other reigning Paſſions, and Prejudices:

RECOMMENDED

To all Parents, Guardians, Tutors, and Preceptors to our young Nobility for the Improvement of their Pupils, and very neceſſary to be read in all Seminaries of uſeful and polite Education.

INTENDED ORIGINALLY

For the Improvement of the younger Branches of the Author's own Family, as a Mirror, whereby they might avoid the Errors in Life, ſhun the Vices, and imitate the Virtues, ſo interwoven in the Characters deſcribed in this Hiſtory.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

Containing the Characters of OLIVER CROMWELL, Admiral BLAKE, Duke of MARLBOROUGH, King of PRUSSIA, VOLTAIRE.

The proper Study of Mankind is Man. POPE.

BY WILLIAM HECKFORD, ESQ.

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M DCC LXXXVII.

THE

PREFACE.

THE ſtudy of hiſtory, contrary to moſt other ſciences, carries delight and amuſement with it, while it conveys at the ſame time uſeful knowledge and inſtruction; and our youth cannot too early imbibe a taſte for its beauties. It is the true utile dulci of the ancients, and ſhould be the firſt to ſtimulate their early minds, and engage their attention. It is a ſtudy that will fill them with noble and exalted ideas, and inſpire a true ſpirit of emulation ſo neceſſary in youth; and will ſerve as a beacon to guide their unwary ſteps

through the maze of life, and of infinite ſervice to them in their future commerce with the world.

To take a view of human nature through all its frailties and imperfections, will (if we trace its windings) lead us to a thorough knowledge of mankind. It is a ſcience well worth our time and labour to inveſtigate, from a ſtudy of which, a knowledge of ourſelves will naturally follow, and (if we credit that univerſally admired poet, in his beautiful Eſſay on Man) is the only true knowledge.

"And all our knowledge is, ourſelves to know."
POPE.

The genius of our youth ſhould never be idle or ſuffered to lie fallow. They ſhould always be employed in ſome uſeful and laudable purſuits, and in order to unbend their minds from

from ſeverer ſtudies, they will find in that of hiſtory a pleaſing relaxation, and that of our own country certainly claims the preference and ſuperiority. Nay, it would be abſurd indeed for them to endeavour after a knowledge in the hiſtory of foreign nations, and at the ſame time remain totally ignorant of that of their own.

If there be any truth in that maxim, that "example draws, when precept "fails," our youth will find in the following hiſtory variety of examples of the beauty of virtue and the deformity of vice, and the fatal conſequences attendant on the latter, even in this life, whereby he will be taught (if he is capable of the leaſt reflection or ſenſibility) to avoid thoſe errors in life, which, when blinded by our

paſſions and prejudices, we are too apt to run into.

This abridgment of the Hiſtory of England is chiefly calculated for thoſe who have not leiſure or inclination to ſtudy it at large, and who ſhudder at the idea of travelling through a ſucceſſion of huge folios, conſiſting in ſome meaſure of a dry and tedious detail of unintereſting events.

THE

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INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

THE actions of kings are ſo obſcured by art, and ſo clouded with ſophiſtry, that it is next to impoſſible (without a thorough knowledge of mankind) to trace the ſource from whence moſt of them proceed, or the ſpring from which they ariſe: we ſhould be cautious therefore in paſſing too haſty a ſentence from appearances; we ſhould likewiſe conſider kings are but human beings, ſubject to the ſame frailties as other men, which ſhould induce us to draw a favourable veil over their failings. Their elevated ſituation in life, ſerves only to make their vices more conſpicuous; and when hurried away by pride, with

with ambition at their heels, they will ſtop at nothing, however unjuſtifiable either by the law of nature or of nations, to improve their conqueſts and extend their dominions, though the way to it ſhould be obtained by wading through a ſcene of blood and ſlaughter.

No wonder a weak miſguided prince, ſurrounded by ſycophants and flatterers, and under the dominion of a corrupt and profligate miniſtry, ſhould be led into errors fatal to the conſtitution; but when we read of monarchs of ſtrong natural parts, of ſolid underſtanding, improved by a liberal education (though there are few remarkable for learning), guilty of ſuch enormous vices as are a diſgrace to a rational being, and ſet him on a level with the brutes; we cannot but reflect on

on their memories with abhorrence and contempt.

However this may appear like prejudice or ſatire, it is a truth acknowledged by Rapin, the moſt candid writer, and the moſt impartial hiſtorian, and free from all that national prejudice ſo peculiar to other hiſtorical writers.

If their vices are ſo eminently conſpicuous, their virtues are equally ſo, and England may boaſt of her Edwards and her Henrys with pride, whoſe virtues and heroic actions have done honour to their exalted ſtations, and rendered them amiable in the ſight of that Being, whoſe repreſentatives they are on earth.

To render both prince and people equally happy, and for each to move within their proper ſphere, *men* ſhould be ſenſible that

that *kings* are neceſſary, and *kings* ſhould not forget they are but *men*.

He that expects perfection even in the moſt exalted ſtate will be deceived: human nature is the ſame from the prince to the peaſant; our good and bad qualities are blended together, and whichever is moſt predominant, conſtitutes the good or bad man.

Would kings but ſeriouſly reflect that flatterers are their greateſt enemies; that truth, which is difficult for a prince to come at, cannot be ſought after or rewarded too much, however unwelcome; that true magnanimity conſiſts in protecting and defending their ſubjects, and not in deſtroying them; that unbounded conqueſts may be bought too dear; that in a government like that of England all the king's endea-

endeavours to uſurp an arbitrary power, are but ſo many ſteps towards his deſtruction; a maxim too frequently exemplified in the following hiſtory: and till a prince can diveſt himſelf of that laudable ambition of preſerving a good name, ſo as to be indifferent what the world ſay of him (which is a piece of philoſophy no one would ſurely wiſh to arrive at), he cannot be too ſolicitous to purchaſe an honeſt fame; which will never fail to make him revered in life, and his memory rendered reſpectable after his death.

Our conſtitution is envied by foreigners, and our laws revered by every civilized nation under the ſun. Our religion, liberties, and properties, are ſecured to us on the moſt ſolid foundation, and no one can rob us of either with impunity. How

jealous ought we then to be of thoſe inеſtimable privileges (ſecured to us by our forefathers), leſt they ſhould be infringed, and how ſolicitous to preſerve them! It behoves us to keep a watchful eye over any unwarrantable encroachments from the prerogative of the crown on one hand, or any wanton abuſe of the liberties of the ſubject on the other, whereby we ſhall preſerve a due equilibrium, and prevent anarchy and confuſion in the conſtitution.

I have brought this hiſtory through a regular ſucceſſion of kings, down from William the Conqueror to the acceſſion of his preſent majeſty king George the Third to the throne of his anceſtors, whom God of his infinite goodnéſs long preſerve, for the ſake of his moſt amiable

conſort and numerous offspring, as well as for the peace and proſperity of this kingdom in general.

May his reign be happy to himſelf and the people committed to his charge; may he ſtudy to preſerve them in wealth, peace, and godlineſs; and may he continue an example of every ſhining and princely virtue, and adorn the exalted ſtation of life God has placed him in; and when the time ſhall come that he ſhall be called hence, may he exchange this earthly crown for a crown of glory and immortality, which is, and ever will be, the never-failing reward of a life of piety and virtue.

In a degenerate age like this, when a total corruption of manners too much pervade the great, I ſhall offer up my fervent prayer, beſeeching him, who is

the high and mighty King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the only Ruler of Princes, that it would pleaſe him to endue the ords and commons of this realm, and all the nobility, with more grace, wiſdom, and underſtanding.

HISTORY

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

ABRIDGED.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR;

SURNAMED THE BASTARD.

Anno 1066. THIS prince's character is variouſly drawn by the hiſtorians, according to the different faces under which they were pleaſed to view him: ſome, conſidering him only as a conqueror of a great kingdom, extol him to the ſkies for his valour and prudence,

and ſlightly paſs over the reſt of his actions; others, conſidering the ſame conqueſt as a real uſurpation, and reflecting chiefly on the means he made uſe of to preſerve it, ſcruple not to repreſent him as a real tyrant. It is certain, they may be all in the right, ſince there was in this monarch a great mixture of good and bad qualities. He was reckoned one of the wiſeſt princes of his time: ever vigilant and active, he ſhewed as great reſolution in executing, as boldneſs in forming his deſign. He ſaw danger at a diſtance, and generally endeavoured to prevent it; but when that could not be done, no man faced it with greater intrepidity. On the other hand, his extreme covetous temper, and partiality to his countrymen, led him to the commiſſion of many things which can hardly be juſtified.

Though, when he found himſelf dying, he left his crown to God's diſpoſal, well knowing he had uſurped it; yet he did all in his power to procure it for his ſon.

Having

Having ſettled his temporal affairs, he cauſed himſelf to be removed to *Hermentrude*, a village near Roan, that he might be at liberty to think of his ſpiritual concerns. Here this prince ended his days, on the 9th of September, in the 64th year of his age, after a reign of 52 years in Normandy, and 22 in England. If ſome of his hiſtorians are to be credited, he expreſſed on his death-bed a hearty ſorrow for all the injuries he had done the Engliſh. His body was removed to Caen without any ceremony, and depoſited in the Abbey-church built by himſelf, and where he had choſen to lie.

However, in what manner ſoever king William may be accuſed or juſtified, in the manner he came to the crown of England, he kept poſſeſſion of the throne by ſuch politic methods as are practiſed by the moſt able princes, but which are ſeldom conſonant to the maxims of true juſtice or equity.

WILLIAM II.

SURNAMED RUFUS.

Anno 1087. THIS prince was of a middle ſtature, but, being very fat, looked ſhorter than he was; his hair a deep yellow, inclined to red; his eyes of two different colours, ſpeckled with two ſmall black ſpots; he was generally of a very ruddy complexion. Though he was far from eloquent, he talked a good deal, eſpecially when angry. His countenance was ſevere; and his voice ſtrong, which he would exalt ſometimes on purpoſe to frighten thoſe he was ſpeaking to: he is ſaid however, to have converſed affably enough with his courtiers, who eaſily found the way to ſoften his fierce temper. During his reign, men's minds were turned to war; yet exceſs and ſenſuality prevailed in a very ſcandalous manner among the nobility,

lity, and even among the clergy: vanity, luſt, and intemperance, reigned every-where. The men appeared ſo effeminate in their dreſs and converſation, that they ſhewed themſelves men in nothing but their daily attempts upon the chaſtity of the women.

We find, in the life of this prince, few laudable actions to balance the accuſations againſt him. I do not ſee how he could poſſibly be juſtified, ſince all the hiſtorians unanimouſly agree in ſaying ſo much ill of him.

It is ſaid, as the king was going to mount his horſe, to take the diverſion of hunting in the New Foreſt, he was told, a certain monk had dreamt a dream which portended ſome great misfortune to him. As he gave but little heed to ſuch preſages, he anſwered jeſtingly, he plainly ſaw the monk wanted money, ſo ordered him an hundred ſhillings, but, however, ſent him word to dream better dreams for the future. Towards the evening, William,

having wounded a ſtag, was purſuing him full ſpeed, when Walter Tyrrel, a French knight, ſhooting at the ſame ſtag, pierced the king through the heart; upon which he fell down dead, without ſpeaking a word. The murderer, though he knew his own innocency, fled for it, however, without any body endeavouring to ſeize him.

Every body was buſy about the king, whoſe body was laid in a cart, which accidentally came by, and carried to Wincheſter, where it was buried the next day without much ceremony, no one lamenting the loſs of a prince ſo little beloved.

Thus fell William Rufus, on the 2d of Auguſt, 1100, in the 44th year of his age, after a reign of 12 years.—His tragical death, in the very place where his brother and nephew periſhed by no leſs extraordinary accidents, gave occaſion for many reflections. It was publicly ſaid, that God was pleaſed to take vengeance upon the Conqueror's family, for deſtroying and laying

laying waſte the country in ſo prodigious a manner, to make the New Foreſt. But there is no need to have recourſe to the father's faults; enough might be ſaid of the ſon, not to wonder at his periſhing by an uncommon death. Accordingly, hiſtorians, without heſitation, rank William Rufus among thoſe princes who are *no* great ornament to the throne of England. In ſhort, he had all the vices of his father, without his virtues: he was neither religious, chaſte, nor temperate. He had neither honour nor conſcience, nor faith nor religion; and he took a pride in appearing as ſuch. He is charged with being blaſphemous in his diſcourſe, and denying a Providence.

HENRY I.

SURNAMED BEAUCLERK.

Anno 1100. WE find, in this prince, a great mixture of good and bad qualities. He was courageous, and of a great capacity both in military and civil affairs. His prudence in the adminiſtration of his government appeared chiefly in that, during his frequent voyages to Normandy, there never was any inſurrection in England, though the kingdom did not want malecontents. He was exceedingly regular in his diet. He was never known to be guilty of any exceſs in eating or drinking, except that which coſt him his life. He was inexorable to all malefactors, being perſuaded ſeverity was abſolutely neceſſary to curb the licentiouſneſs introduced in the laſt reign. His education was the reverſe of that of William Rufus; whereas this laſt had no learning

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at all, Henry was brought up to letters, and made great progreſs in his ſtudies; hence he acquired the ſurname of Beauclerk, that is, the Scholar; for in thoſe days none but eccleſiaſtics troubled themſelves about books, and princes leaſt of all others: he retained all his life a reliſh for the ſciences imbibed in his youth. His handſome face, his ſweet and ſerene looks, his free and open countenance, his affable carriage and agreeable converſation, prepoſſeſſed at firſt ſight all the world in his favour. Theſe fine qualities would have rendered him an accompliſhed prince, had they not been ſullied with many faults, among which cruelty, avarice, and an inordinate love of women, were moſt predominant. The firſt appeared in his barbarous uſage of his elder brother: the ſecond, in his exorbitant and frequent taxes on the people: the third, in the great number of baſtards by ſeveral miſtreſſes.

About the latter end of Auguſt 1135, he was ſeized with a violent illneſs, which carried him off in ſeven days. It is ſaid, he was the occaſion of it himſelf, by eating to exceſs ſome lampreys, of which he was very fond. He was then at the caſtle of Lyon near Roan, a place he much delighted in. He died in the 68th year of his age, and the 36th of his reign. His body was cut in pieces in order to be embalmed, after the rude manner of thoſe days. He was brought to England, and buried at Reading.

KING STEPHEN.

Anno 1135. WHEN this prince's character is conſidered in general only, he may be ſaid to be worthy to live in better times, and his good qualities to outweigh his defects. However, it would be very difficult to juſtify all his proceedings in acquiring the crown, and particularly the breach of his oath: accordingly, though the conſent of the barons may ſeem to be of ſome weight, yet as the crown was procured by unjuſt practices, many are of opinion he ought, for all that, to be deemed an uſurper. His breaking his word, on certain occaſions, is moreover a ſtain to his memory. Perhaps the circumſtances of the times and affairs hurried him beyond his natural inclination; but however, the commendations due to his valour, clemency, and generoſity, cannot be denied

him. The firſt of theſe virtues appeared chiefly at the battle of Lincoln, where he was taken priſoner. The other two muſt be owned, when it is conſidered, that throughout his reign there is not a ſingle inſtance of ſeverity to be found, though ſeveral of the barons, whom the chance of war had put in his power, had given him but too much reaſon to uſe them with rigour. It is true, there are hiſtorians, that made it their buſineſs to blacken his reputation; but it muſt be obſerved, moſt of them wrote in the reign of Henry the Second, or his ſons. As for William of Malmſbury, who was cotemporary with Stephen, he is known to have been the earl of Glouceſter's creature, to whom he dedicated the laſt part of his hiſtory. This alone ſhould make us read with caution what he relates to Stephen's diſadvantage. After all, it is not eaſy to determine, whether the crown juſtly belonged to Matilda, or Stephen's election entitled him to

to take poſſeſſion. What may be ſaid with more certainty, is, that after the conqueſt the Saxon laws were no longer obſerved, and it does not appear that the Normans had any ſettled rules concerning the ſucceſſion of the crown.

The troubles during this reign furniſhed the clergy with a favourable opportunity to exalt the mitre above the crown. The court of Rome improved alſo theſe junctures, to introduce into England new laws, which the Engliſh doubtleſs would have oppoſed at any other time. The canon law, compiled by Gratian in 1151, by the authority of Eugenius the Third, was brought into England on occaſion of the conteſts between the archbiſhop of Canterbury and the biſhop of Wincheſter, about the legateſhip. Theſe differences gave the Italian canoniſts opportunity to ſettle in England; and introduced, by degrees, the ſtudy of the canon law into

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the univerſity of Oxford, where Vacarius was the firſt profeſſor.

Stephen left one legitimate ſon, called William, who was earl of Boulogne in right of the queen his mother. He had alſo one daughter, named Maria, who, after ſhe had put on the veil, was notwithſtanding married to Philip of Alſatia; but, upon the death of her huſband, returned to the nunnery.

A natural ſon of Stephen, called alſo William, has given occaſion to ſome, deceived by the likeneſs of names, to affirm this prince left behind him only a baſtard ſon.

Although, after his agreement with Henry, Stephen could have no hopes of leaving the crown to his ſon, he was ſo touched with the miſeries the kingdom endured, that he reſolved to uſe all his endeavours to repair them: he even ſeemed to take proper meaſures to that end; but death, which ſurpriſed him unawares, prevented

vented him from executing ſo generous a deſign.

He died in the fiftieth year of his age, on the 25th of October, 1154. He was buried by his queen in the abbey of Feverſham, which he himſelf had founded.

HENRY

HENRY II.

SURNAMED PLANTAGENET.

Anno 1154. HENRY the Second was one of the moſt illuſtrious princes of his time, both for greatneſs of genius and extent of dominions. The mixture of vices and virtues in this monarch, make it difficult to give him a general character that perfectly agrees with him. He was valiant, prudent, generous, politic, ſtudious, learned, and of an exalted genius. On the other hand, he was exceſſively haughty, of an immeaſurable ambition and a boundleſs luſt. Never ſatisfied with love or empire, he ſpent his whole life in purſuit of new conqueſts in both. He attempted the chaſtity of all that came in his way, not excepting the princeſs deſigned for his own ſon: failings, which, in a great meaſure, balance all his noble endowments. In the beginning of his reign, which was

one

one of the happieſt for ſome years, there was not in Europe a king more feared or reſpected. Encircled with glory and honour, which ſeemed to promiſe him great proſperity, he was looked upon as the happieſt prince in the world, before Becket's affair interrupted his felicity. But that fatal quarrel, which created him ſo many troubles, being followed by diſſentions in his family, he beheld the happineſs, which till then had attended him, turned into misfortune.

However, if this prince was unhappy, his misfortunes fell only on his own head, and not on his kingdom, which had never been in ſo flouriſhing a condition as in his reign. By his acceſſion to the crown, England became one of the moſt powerful ſtates in Europe, and began from that time to be on a level with France, to which before it was very much inferior. Beſides the large and rich provinces annexed in his time to the Engliſh monarchy;

chy; the conqueſt of Ireland, is what gives a great luſtre to his reign, and ought to render his memory dear to the Engliſh.

About this time he fell ſick at Chinon, and perceiving his end was at hand, cauſed himſelf to be carried into the church before the altar, where, after confeſſing himſelf, and expreſſing ſome ſigns of repentance, he died on the 6th of July, 1189, in the 57th year of his age, after a reign of 34 years. His corpſe was removed to Fonteveraud, where he was buried. An extraordinary accident rendered this removal of his body very remarkable; his ſon Richard (who had ſhortened his father's life by his unnatural behaviour) coming to meet the funeral pomp, in order to attend his father to the grave, upon his approach, the blood in great abundance guſhed out of the mouth and noſtrils of the corpſe. Richard, though naturally very hard-hearted, was ſo moved at this ſight, that he burſt out into tears, and openly accuſed himſelf of being the occaſion of his father's death.

RICHARD I.

SURNAMED ÇŒUR DE LION.

Anno 1189. THIS valiant prince, who, for the greatneſs of his courage, was ſurnamed Cœur de Lion, after commending his valour, which was ſomething like a brutiſh fierceneſs, in vain do we ſeek in him ſome other virtue to afford matter for his panegyric. Thoſe that praiſe him for his bounty and magnificence, do not conſider, if he was liberal and ſplendid, it was at the expence of his ſubjects, from whom he extorted ſeveral large ſums by unjuſtifiable means. But on the other hand we find in him abundance of vices, and ſome of the moſt enormous; his rebellion againſt his own father is a blemiſh may be juſtly caſt on his memory. It is even apparent, God was pleaſed to puniſh him for it, by a continual ſcene of troubles

bles during his ten years reign, and particularly by a fifteen months captivity. We find likewiſe in this prince an inſatiable love of money, which proved the cauſe of his death; a pride which made him look upon his equals with contempt, and his inferiors as ſlaves. In fine, if what hiſtorians I have conſulted ſay of him be true, an unbridled luſt hurried him, not only to neglect the queen his wife, in order to abandon himſelf to an infamous debauchery, but even to ſins againſt nature. It is affirmed a poor hermit took the freedom to upbraid him with that deteſtable crime before his whole court, and to conjure him in the name of God to reflect on the deſtruction of Sodom. Be this as it will, all thoſe that have written his life agree, that pride, avarice, and luſt, were his three reigning vices. It is ſaid that being one day admoniſhed by Fulk, curate of Nevilly, a man famous for his zeal, to throw off thoſe wicked habits

which

which were commonly called *his three daughters*; he replied jeſtingly, that it was his deſign; and to that end he reſolved to give the firſt of the templars, the ſecond to the monks, and the third to the biſhops.

Richard was tall and well-made, his eyes were blue and ſparkling, and his hair of a bright yellow, inclining to red.

It may be ſaid that England, where he never was above eight months during the whole courſe of his ten years reign, was very unhappy under his government. He loaded his ſubjects with frequent impoſitions and exceſſive taxes. And yet no other benefit accrued to the people for theſe prodigious ſums, but a little glory for their king, with which, however, they were ſatisfied, as redounding to the honour of the nation.

It is remarked, as a thing deſerving particular notice, that this prince, who reſtored the uſe of the croſs-bow, received his death's wound from that inſtrument,

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KING JOHN;
SURNAMED LACKLAND.

Anno 1199. IF this prince's character be drawn according to Matthew Paris, his chief hiſtorian, he muſt be repreſented as one of the vileſt wretches that ever lived. But as the hiſtories of princes who have had any conteſt with the court of Rome, are to be read with great caution, it is better therefore, without regarding the particular ſentiments and expreſſions of the hiſtorian, ſolely to examine the actions of this monarch, in order to diſcover his temper and inclinations. It is certain we muſt frame a very diſadvantageous idea of him, when one conſiders his unjuſt proceedings with regard to his brother Richard: the death of prince Arthur his nephew, of which he never cleared himſelf thoroughly: the perpetual impriſonment of Eleanor of Bretagne, his niece:

niece: his extreme indolence when Philip Auguſtus was conquering his dominions in France: his baſe reſignation of his crown to the pope: his breach of faith with the barons: and laſtly, his bringing into the kingdom an army of foreign mercenaries to be revenged of his ſubjects (all which actions are recorded in the hiſtory at large). However, if one had a mind to undertake his vindication upon moſt of theſe articles, it would not perhaps be ſo difficult as it ſeems at firſt ſight: but, without meddling with a ſubject which would lead me too far, I ſhall content myſelf with ſaying of this prince what I ſaid of William Rufus; that finding in king John ſcarce one valuable qualification, it is not worth while to ſtay to juſtify ſome particular actions, though it evidently appears that the writers of his life have drawn him in blacker colours than he deſerved. This prince had great failings, which would not have been

ſo viſible or ſo aggravated by the hiſtorians, had he been cotemporary with a king of France of leſs policy and ambition, with a pope of leſs pride and more conſcience, and with a nobility of a leſs turbulent ſpirit. As for raiſing taxes, without the conſent of the ſtates, it may be ſaid, it was not very unuſual, ſince William the Conqueror, as the reader may have obſerved in ſome former reigns. And yet this is what ſeveral modern hiſtorians bitterly exclaim againſt, as if in thoſe days England enjoyed the ſame privileges as at preſent. It is eaſy to ſee things were upon a different foot, when it is conſidered, that there was a neceſſity to recur to the times of the Saxon kings to find the foundation of theſe privileges.

King John's fortune never agreed with his temper; he was a lover of eaſe and quiet, and his fortune was to be perpetually in action. He was fit neither for proſperity nor adverſity. The former ren-

dered him extremely inſolent, and the latter ſurpriſingly dejected, ſo that a middle fortune would doubtleſs have been moſt ſuitable to his temper.

He is accuſed of exceeding his father, Henry II. in luſt, a failing which princes are ſeldom very reproachfully taxed with, unleſs there is a ſettled deſign to defame them for other reaſons. It cannot be denied that the Monks have endeavoured to paint king John in the blackeſt colours, in order to excuſe the pope's proceedings againſt him. This evidently appears in the calumny caſt on his memory, of ſending ambaſſadors to the Miramolin of Africa, with an offer of his kingdom, and a promiſe to embrace the Mahometan religion, which is altogether improbable. However, as unlikely as this charge is, there are modern hiſtorians who ſcruple not to give it for truth, in a belief that Matthew Paris, who wrote in the reign of Henry III. ſon of John, would not have ventured

ventured to advance it, if it had been groundleſs. But this argument ſeems of little weight, ſince that hiſtorian has dared to ſpeak in very diſreſpectful terms of Henry III. himſelf, without any dread of his reſentment, from which, perhaps, he was ſcreened when he wrote. Add to this, that in thoſe days, books were not immediately diſperſed, but remained many times a long while concealed in the monaſteries before they were publiſhed.

John was always unfortunate, and, if we may believe the hiſtorians, always hated by his ſubjects; one cannot, however, reconcile this conſtant hatred of the Engliſh, with the great eaſe wherewith he levied armies when he wanted them, and even whilſt he was under the ſentence of excommunication. We muſt therefore diſtinguiſh two periods in this prince's reign. The firſt includes the time from his coronation to his reſignation of the crown to the pope. During this ſpace, if

he was not in great eſteem, at leaſt it does not appear he was ſo odious, as his ill conduct afterwards rendered him. The ſecond period begins at his reſignation, and ends with his life. It cannot be denied, that during this period his ſubjects had a ſtrong averſion to him, and yet, if his government be conſidered ſeparately from his perſonal qualities, it may be ſaid to be none of the worſt. He was the firſt or chiefeſt that appointed thoſe excellent forms of civil government in London, and moſt other cities of the kingdom. According to Camden and others, John was the firſt that coined ſterling money.

He was ſeized with a violent fever, which was heightened by inconſiderately eating too ripe peaches: next day, not being able to ride, he was carried in a litter to Sleford caſtle, from whence, the next day, he proceeded to Newark; here finding his illneſs increaſe, he made his will, and appointed

pointed Henry, his eldeſt ſon, then but ten years of age, his heir.

The care of his ſalvation employed his thoughts during the reſt of his ſickneſs, which put an end to his days on the 18th of October, 1216, in the 51ſt year of his age, after an unhappy reign of ſeventeen years. His body was carried to Worceſter, according to his own order, and buried with little funeral pomp, in the cathedral, where his tomb (with his image upon it) is ſtill to be ſeen. Some will have it that he was poiſoned by a Monk, but that is very improbable, ſince it is not mentioned by any of the cotemporary hiſtorians.

HENRY III.
SURNAMED OF WINCHESTER.

Anno 1216. THIS prince's character ſo viſibly appears in all the circumſtances of his life, that it will be needleſs to draw it more fully. His narrow genius, his eaſineſs to be governed by proud and ſelf-intereſted counſellors, his inconſtant and capricious temper, and the notions of arbitrary power inſtilled into him from his very youth, were the real cauſes of the troubles which diſturbed his reign. Too weak when there was occaſion for ſteadineſs, and too haughty when it was neceſſary to ſtoop and accommodate himſelf to the times, he ſeemed to ſtudy inceſſantly to act contrary to his own intereſts. Nothing can be ſaid of his courage, ſince he never gave any ſenſible proof of it. But he may be juſtly commended for his continence, and averſion to every thing that

that looked like cruelty, being always ſatiſfied with puniſhing the rebels in their purſes, when he might have ſpilt their blood on the ſcaffold. He was exceedingly greedy of money, but it was to ſquander it away ſo idly, that the vaſt ſums he levied upon his ſubjects made him never the richer. How preſſing ſoever his neceſſities were, he could not help laviſhing his money upon his favourites, notwithſtanding his great pains to obtain aids from his parliament. This profuſeneſs, and the immenſe ſums fruitleſsly employed in the unfortunate affair of *Sicily*, were the principal cauſes of the mortifications and diſgraces he was expoſed to during the whole courſe of his life. A detail of thoſe unhappy events are recorded at large in Rapin's hiſtory, but cannot be brought within the ſcope of my preſent intention.

However, about this time there was a ſedition (anno 1272) at Norwich, occaſioned by a quarrel between the citizens

and the monks, in which the cathedral and monaſtery adjoining were reduced to aſhes by the townſmen. Henry, reſolved not to let this riot go unpuniſhed, went in perſon to Norwich, where he cauſed the offenders to be ſeverely puniſhed. In returning to London he was ſeized at St. Edmondſbury with a languiſhing diſtemper, which not ſeeming to be dangerous, hindered him not from continuing his journey to London. But his ſickneſs increaſing after his arrival, he died in a very few days, aged ſixty-ſix years, whereof he had reigned fifty-ſix. He ordered that his body ſhould be interred near the ſhrine of Edward the Confeſſor, in the abbey-church of Weſtminſter, where his tomb (with his ſtatue in braſs) is to be ſeen to this day.

EDWARD

EDWARD I.

SURNAMED LONGSHANKS.

Anno 1272. EDWARD, the First of that name since the Norman conquest, and the fourth since Egbert. This prince had doubtless very noble qualities, and particularly great valour and prudence. He knew how to master his passions, and return to the right way, when he had strayed from it; a quality never to be sufficiently commended in a sovereign. When we compare him with his father, his grandfather, and his own son his successor, we find he far excelled them all. This comparison, which one can hardly help making, has been so much to his advantage, that the English historians have used the strongest expressions in his encomium, and would have him pass for the greatest prince of his age. A famous writer has not

ſcrupled to ſay, *that God had pitched his tabernacle in the breaſt of that monarch.* But his whole conduct, with regard to Scotland, does not give us ſo advantageous an idea of him. However, without examining too cloſely the expreſſions uſed by the hiſtorians in his praiſe, it may be ſaid he was a great king, and that England received conſiderable advantages from his adminiſtration. The kingdom, weakened by the ill management of the two preceding kings, was reſtored to its former ſplendour, by the abilities of this prince, who knew how to make himſelf beloved and reſpected by his ſubjects, as well as dreaded by his neighbours. The conqueſt of Wales, in vain attempted by his predeceſſors, added a great luſtre to his reign, and was very beneficial to his kingdom. That of Scotland would, no doubt, have gained him more honour had it been entirely finiſhed, ſince the Scotch hiſtorians would have ſpoken of him in different terms from what

what they have done, if at the time of their writing they had been Engliſh.

He was very perſonable, and taller than the generality of men by the head. His hair was black, and curled naturally, and his eyes of the ſame colour, ſparkled with uncommon vivacity. He would have been perfectly well-ſhaped, if his legs, which were a little too long, had been in proportion to the reſt of his body. Hence he had the ſurname of *Longſhanks*. He joined to his bodily perfections a ſolid judgment, a great penetration, and a prudent conduct, which very rarely ſuffered him to make a falſe ſtep. Beſides this he had principles of juſtice, honour, and honeſty, which reſtrained him from countenancing vice, not only in his moſt intimate courtiers, but even in his own ſon. Moreover, he was of an exemplary chaſtity, *a virtue very ſeldom found in ſovereign princes*. All theſe noble qualities bred in the hearts of his ſubjects a love and eſteem,

which did not a little contribute to the rendering his reign peaceable at home, whilſt his arms were employed abroad. As for the affair of Scotland, it may be ſaid to procure more honour than real advantages to England, ſince after torrents of blood ſpilt in that quarrel, the Engliſh were conſtrained in the end to relinquiſh their project.

Edward had, by Eleanor of Caſtile, his firſt wife, four ſons and nine daughters: Edward the Second, his ſucceſſor, was the only ſon that ſurvived him.

He had likewiſe two ſons and one daughter by Margaret of France, his ſecond wife, whom he married in the 60th year of his age, though ſhe was but 18 years old.

Edward, after many rebuffs from the Scotch, was implacably exaſperated againſt them, and reſolved to be ſignally revenged of that nation. To that end he ſummoned all the vaſſals of the crown, without exception, to meet him at Carliſle about the middle

middle of the ſummer, on pain of forfeiting their fees. His intention was to march into the heart of Scotland, and deſtroy that kingdom from ſea to ſea as he had often threatened. But Providence permitted him not to execute ſo barbarous a purpoſe. He was hardly arrived at Carliſle, where he had drawn together the fineſt army England had ever ſeen, when he was ſeized by a diſtemper, which put an end to his days and all his projects. After ſome orders given to his ſon, he cauſed himſelf to be carried by eaſy journies into Scotland, being deſirous to die in a country he had thrice conquered. In this manner he advanced as far as the little town of Burgh, where his ſickneſs being increaſed by a dyſentery which came upon him, he reſigned his laſt breath on the 7th of July, 1307, in the 68th year of his age, having reigned thirty-four years.

His corpſe was carried to Waltham, and from thence to Weſtminſter-abbey, where it was done over with wax, and laid by Henry his father.

EDWARD II.

SURNAMED OF CAERNARVON.

Anno 1307. THIS prince had a very mean genius which permitted him not to diſtinguiſh what was for his advantage, from what was hurtful to him. He followed his humour, without troubling himſelf about the conſequences, and without being able to remedy the misfortunes he thereby drew on himſelf. Though he had many failings, he may be affirmed to have been more weak than wicked. To ſum up his character in a few words, he was exceedingly like his grandfather Henry III. Edward his father, a much wiſer prince than he, and taught by the misfortunes of the two kings his immediate predeceſſors, ever avoided, as a moſt dangerous rock, all occaſion of quarrel with the nobility; chooſing rather to give way a little than

than hazard his quiet to gratify his reſentment. The ſon had not a ſufficient capacity to follow ſo good an example, or to improve by his inſtructions. He gave himſelf up entirely to his favourites, and choſe rather to forfeit the affection of his people, than deny himſelf the ſatisfaction of heaping favours on thoſe he loved. His weakneſs and incapacity drew on him the contempt of his ſubjects, which was ſoon changed into hatred, when he was ſeen to ſacrifice all to his paſſions. He had the misfortune to have a beautiful and amorous wife (Iſabella of France, by whom he had two ſons and two daughters), who giving way to an infamous paſſion, completed his ruin, for fear perhaps of being herſelf prevented. Certainly he was treated too ſeverely by his ſubjects, whoſe inſolence increaſed in proportion to their ſovereign's weakneſs. One cannot obſerve, without wonder, that there was not a ſingle perſon willing to draw his

his ſword in his defence. I ſhall not undertake to determine how far in thoſe days the rights of the people, with regard to the king, might extend. I ſhall only ſay, there was no precedent to follow, for this is the firſt inſtance in the Engliſh hiſtory of a king depoſed by his ſubjects, at leaſt ſince the conqueſt (and I go back no further).

Edward the Second is taxed with being given to drink. Some ſpeak of his fondneſs for Gaveſton (a man whom his father had baniſhed for his vicious habits, and whom the ſon, contrary to an oath he had taken in his father's life-time, recalled), ſo as to make it believed very criminal. Others, on the contrary, commend him for his continency, and indeed we do not find he had any miſtreſſes or baſtards.

At the arrival of the commiſſioners appointed to depoſe him, the unfortunate king came out from his bed chamber, in a mourning-gown, with looks de-

mon-

monſtrating his inward trouble. As he was acquainted with the occaſion of their coming, the ſight of that formidable power which had juſt deſpoiled him of royalty, made ſuch an impreſſion on his mind, that he fell into a ſwoon, from whence he could hardly recover. As ſoon as he came to himſelf the commiſſioners told him their meſſage, and repreſented to him the ill conſequence of his refuſal. Then the unhappy prince, with a ſadneſs that could not be ſeen without pity, anſwered,

"That he ſubmitted to whatever was "required of him with the greater reſig-"nation, as he acknowledged his ſins "were the ſole cauſe of his misfortunes." He added, moreover, "that he could not "behold, without extreme grief, the aver-"ſion his people had for him; but, if his "ſorrow could admit of any comfort, it "was from the conſideration of his ſub-

"jects

" jects goodneſs to his ſon, for which he " returned them thanks."

After this anſwer he proceeded to the ceremony of reſignation, by delivering to them the crown, ſceptre and other enſigns of royalty. After a certain form, ſuitable to the occaſion, the high-ſteward broke his ſtaff, and declared all the king's officers diſcharged from his ſervice.

Thus ended the reign of Edward the Second, in the 43d year of his age, having laſted nineteen years.

EDWARD

EDWARD III.

SURNAMED WINDSOR.

Anno 1327. THE variety of intereſting events of this prince, during a reign of 51 years, having come to the crown in his minority, are too long for my deſign, but which are well worth reading: I ſhall content myſelf with giving his general character.

This famous prince was very tall, but well-ſhaped, and of ſo noble and majeſtic an aſpect, that his very looks commanded reſpect and veneration: affable and obliging to the good, but inexorable to the bad; there are few princes to be met with in hiſtory, in whom were ſo well mixed the duties of a ſovereign, with thoſe of an honeſt man and a good Chriſtian; though in this laſt reſpect, his conduct was not altogether blameleſs. His converſation

tion was eaſy, and always accompanied with gravity and diſcretion: friend of the poor, the fatherleſs, the widow, and all who were unhappily fallen into misfortune; he made it his buſineſs to procure them ſome comfort in their affliction. Never had a king before him beſtowed honours and rewards with more judgment, and greater regard to true merit. Though his valour was acknowledged and admired by all the world, it never made him proud. Never did he ſhow greater ſigns of humility than in the courſe of his victories, which he conſtantly aſcribed to the ſole protection of heaven. He knew how to maintain the prerogatives of the crown, without incroaching on the privileges of the people. In all the former reigns there had not been enacted ſo many advantageous ſtatutes to the nation as in this. Edward always agreeing with the auguſt body of the nation's repreſentatives, made that harmony inſtrumental to curb the deſigns

ſigns of the court of Rome, which never dared to quarrel with him. The glory of the prince of Wales, his ſon, added a new luſtre to his own; and his conſtant union with his queen (*Philippa of Hainault*) increaſed his happineſs. As he was never too elate in proſperity, ſo in adverſity he was never too much dejected: his moderation appeared no leſs in his loſs of the provinces that had coſt him ſo much toil and treaſure, than in his victories which had gained him the poſſeſſion. In a word, he might be reckoned an accompliſhed prince, if his ambition had not cauſed him to break, in a diſhonourable manner, the peace made with Scotland, in order to diſpoſſeſs a minor king, who, beſides, was his brother-in-law. Some add likewiſe the rupture with France, and his pretenſions to the crown of that kingdom, which they term extravagant, and wholly aſcribe to an ambitious motive. As to his weakneſs in falling in love in his old age (after the

death of his queen) with Alice Peirce; that blemiſh is much leſſened by the many noble qualities which rendered him ſo praiſe-worthy. One might in ſome meaſure excuſe him, by ſaying, he conſidered this paſſion, at firſt, as an amuſement only, to divert him in his troubles; and knowing little of love in his youthful days, took not ſufficient care to keep himſelf from it in his old age.

Alice his favourite, who managed him in his ſickneſs, ſuffered very few to come into his room. When ſhe ſaw he was dying, ſhe ſeized every thing of value ſhe could find, even to the rings on his fingers, and withdrew. His courtiers and chaplains ſhewed no leſs ingratitude. They all deſerted him, without vouchſafing to warn him of the little time he had to live, and of the account he was ſhortly to give of his actions to God. There was only one ſingle prieſt, who accidentally ſeeing him forſaken in his laſt agonies, came

came near the bed to comfort him. He addreſſed to him ſome exhortations, to which the dying king endeavoured to reply; but his words were not articulate enough to be underſtood. The only word diſtinctly pronounced was the name of Chriſt, juſt as he fetched his laſt breath.

Thus died this illuſtrious prince, in the 66th year of his age.

RICHARD

RICHARD II.

SURNAMED BOURDEAUX.

Anno 1377. THE duke of Lancaſter governed the ſtate during the king's minority; but when he came to the age of 17, he began more plainly to diſcover his inclinations, which hitherto had been reſtrained by the authority of his governors. He had a high conceit of his own merit, and thought himſelf as well qualified to govern the ſtate as Edward III. was at his age: but there was a great difference between theſe two princes. Edward was very young, with a great penetration, had none but noble and generous inclinations, tending to his own glory and his people's happineſs. Richard, on the contrary, minded only trifles, and thought of nothing but his pleaſures. He loved pomp and magnificence, more than any

any of his predeceſſors, and thereby ran into ſuperfluous expences, which idly conſumed his revenues. Flatterers had a great ſway over him. He expreſſed as great affection for thoſe that applauded his paſſions, as averſion for ſuch as adviſed him to lead a life worthy a great prince. Not being of a warlike diſpoſition, he was obſerved in council to be always inclined to negociation rather than to vigorous reſolutions. As ſoon as he was out of his childhood he was ſeen to chooſe favourites, whoſe inclinations ſuited with his own, or at leaſt who artfully feigned to approve of whatever he did.

Amidſt a ſea of troubles which he had brought on the nation by his obſtinacy, ill conduct, and incapacity; articles of impeachment were drawn up againſt him, when, in the preſence of a great number of lords, Richard delivered up the crown and ſceptre, with the other enſigns of

royalty, and by an inſtrument, ſigned with his own hand, confeſſed himſelf unworthy and unfit to govern any longer.

Thus ended the deſpotic reign of a weak prince, who notwithſtanding, in his younger years ſeemed to have ſome noble and generous inclinations, but unfortunately ſuffered himſelf to be corrupted by flattery. He had the advantage of being deſcended from a father and grandfather ſo univerſally eſteemed, that had he never ſo little anſwered the nobleneſs of his birth, he might have been one of the moſt glorious kings that ever wore the Engliſh crown. But, like Edward II. his great grandfather, he had the weakneſs to give himſelf up to the guidance of his favourites. Accordingly, he underwent the ſame fate with that prince, whom he did but too much reſemble in every other reſpect. The chief difference to be obſerved between them, is, that Richard was of a more

cruel

cruel and inflexible temper, and uſurped a more abſolute power than Edward, which rendered him more odious and leſs lamented.

HENRY IV.

SURNAMED BOLINGBROKE.

Anno 1399. MOST of the hiſtorians have endeavoured to give, in my opinion, a very unſuitable idea of this prince. They ſpeak with praiſe of his mildneſs, clemency, generoſity, valour, and many other virtues, which appear more in their writings than in his actions. If he had ſome reputation, whilſt a private perſon, he does not ſeem to have increaſed or maintained it, after his acceſſion to the throne. His diſtinguiſhing character was an extreme jealouſy of a crown, acquired by ways not univerſally approved, and preſerved by ſhedding a torrent of noble blood. The death of Richard the Second will be an indelible ſtain to his memory, though his uſurpation of the throne could be juſtified. In ſhort he performed nothing remarkable to afford matter for panegyric.

negyric. His expeditions into Scotland and Wales, have nothing to diſtinguiſh him with honour.

If he happily freed himſelf from all the conſpiracies againſt him, he was chiefly indebted to the mayor of Cirenceſter, the ſheriff of Yorkſhire, and the earl of Weſtmorland; the battle of Shrewſbury, wherein he vanquiſhed young Percy, is the only notable action in his whole reign. His continual fear of inſurrections cauſed him to neglect ſeveral opportunities of humbling France, and recovering the provinces loſt by his predeceſſors. He even ſuffered many inſults from the French, Scotch, Welch, and Bretons, without ſhewing much reſentment. In fine, he employed all his thoughts in preſerving his crown, and avoiding all occaſions by which it might be endangered. This prudent policy ought to be the chief, if not the ſole ſubject of his encomium, as it was the ſole motive of his actions, wherein nothing ap-

pears to render him eminent. Though he had cauſed Richard the Second to be depoſed for uſurping an abſolute power; he did not ſeem by his conduct to have ſo great an averſion for that crime, as he pretended, when it was his intereſt to expoſe it. It is true, towards the end of his life, he ſeemed to have formed a deſign to follow maxims more conformable to the nation's liberties; but God was not pleaſed to allow him time to ſhew the effects of this reſolution.

When I conſider the exceſſive commendations beſtowed on this prince, I cannot help ſuſpecting, that the glory of being the firſt burner of heretics, and of protecting the clergy againſt the attempts of the houſe of commons, were the main ſprings of all theſe encomiums. It is well known the eccleſiaſtics are as zealous in praiſing their benefactors, as in blackening their oppoſers.

In

In the beginning of the year 1413 Henry was ſeized with a diſtemper, which in three months laid him in the grave; ſome ſay it was the leproſy, others affirm it was a ſort of apoplexy, which had frequent returns, and threw him into fits, that took away his ſenſes: however this be, his diſtemper, which ſeized him at ſeveral times, laſted near three months, and then brought him to his end. A certain perſon having formerly told him he ſhould die at Jeruſalem; he remembered the prediction, and verily believed God would make him his inſtrument to reſcue that city out of the hands of the Infidels. Thus perſuaded, he fancied his death was not ſo near, and thought it his duty to dedicate the remainder of his days to that glorious expedition. Accordingly, he took the croſs, and calling a great council, communicated his deſign, and ordered all things to be ſpeedily prepared for his voyage. But preſently after the returns

of his diſtemper, being more frequent than uſual, he found, inſtead of undertaking ſuch an expedition, he ought to employ all his thoughts in preparations for death. His continual fear of loſing his crown, by reaſon of the many attempts to wreſt it from him, increaſed with his years. Every time he went to bed he ordered it to be laid on his pillow, leſt it ſhould be ſeized before he was dead.

Henry's laſt fit ſeized him in St. Edward's chapel, as he was worſhipping at that ſaint's ſhrine In a few hours he reſigned his laſt breath, on the 20th of March, 1413, in the 46th year of his age, having reigned thirteen years and five months.

HENRY

HENRY V.

SURNAMED MONMOUTH.

Anno 1413. IF to know this monarch's character, we follow, without examination, the praiſes beſtowed on him by the authors of his nation, we muſt imagine him the moſt accompliſhed prince that ever appeared in the world before him.

In his very childhood he ſhewed a ſtrong inclination for war, which increaſing with his years, the king his father thought proper to indulge it. At eighteen years of age he commanded an army againſt the Welch, and defeated them in two battles. But his victories did him an unſpeakable prejudice. The king his father, exceſſively jealous of his authority, and dreading the conſequences of ſo noble a beginning, conſidered his ſon's reputation as likely one

day to prove deſtructive of his quiet: diſturbed at this thought, he removed him from all warlike, as he had done from all civil offices, for fear it ſhould be out of his power to check his flight, when once he ſhould take wing. Not an Engliſh hiſtorian aſcribes to him the leaſt defect, but all unanimouſly ſpeak of him as a perfect hero; on the other hand, the French have endeavoured to ſhade his portraiture with certain ſtrokes that ſully the luſtre. It will be neceſſary therefore, in order to form a juſt idea of him, to conſider ſome of his actions with their circumſtances, independently of the admiration of the one, and the envy of the other.

In the firſt place, with reſpect to the government of his own kingdom, he ought not to be denied his due praiſe, for avoiding to tread in the ſteps of Richard the Second, and even of his own father: he conſtantly forbore to encroach on the liberties and privileges of the people. His readineſs

dineſs at all times to give the royal aſſent to ſuch acts, as the parliament judged neceſſary for the welfare of the kingdom, was a clear evidence of his regard for the good and happineſs of his people.

But it is not chiefly for what he acted in England, that hiſtorians have been ſo laviſh of their praiſes; his warlike exploits are the principal ſubject of his panegyric. And yet to ſpeak without aggravation, he was perhaps in no reſpect leſs remarkable, notwithſtanding the glorious ſucceſs that attended his arms: the conqueſt of France, conſidered in itſelf, has ſomething grand and marvellous.

The battle of Agincourt is the great, and almoſt ſole warlike exploit, which can juſtly afford matter for panegyric. In this famous action, he gave proof of an uncommon conduct, reſolution, and bravery. But this very battle, the ſucceſs whereof was ſo glorious, gives likewiſe occaſion to tax him with imprudence. It may

be ſaid, that if he was victorious, it was becauſe he had reduced himſelf to an abſolute neceſſity of vanquiſhing or dying: to which a general never expoſes himſelf, whatever the event may be, without cauſing his conduct to be ſeverely cenſured. His undertaking to retire to Calais, without foreſeeing the difficulty of the march, and without being ſecure of a paſſage over the Somme; his wilfulneſs in reſolving to paſs that river, in order to force his way through an army ſo ſuperior in number to his own, ſeem excuſable only by the ſucceſs of the battle of Agincourt, which was a ſort of miracle. Had he been vanquiſhed, as he ſhould naturally have been, he would have been infallibly charged with indiſcretion or raſhneſs. This battle was more glorious for him, on account of his perſonal valour, than with regard to his military capacity. It muſt be confeſſed, never did prince expoſe himſelf more in battle, and give more ſignal proofs

proofs of true valour, than did Henry in that action.

As for his other conqueſts in France, I do not know whether his greateſt admirers have reaſon to wiſh he had met with more oppoſition. What might have happened in that caſe, is beyond human knowledge. It cannot however be denied, that the victory of Agincourt prepoſſeſſes us in his favour. But what may be extolled in him, without danger of being deceived, is the excellency of his genius, and the ſolidity of his judgment. He knew how to manage the great undertaking he had formed with wonderful addreſs, wiſely improving the ſeveral revolutions in France, and making them all turn to his advantage. Few princes would have ſtopped like him, after ſo glorious a victory as that of Agincourt, and preferred a repoſe; which, though ſeemingly leſs glorious than the continuation of the war, was in reality to him more advantageous.

This

This policy, in my opinion, is one of the brighteſt paſſages of his life, and ſhews the ſoundneſs of his judgment. His negociation with the dauphin, and the duke of Burgundy at the ſame time, and his inſtructions to his ambaſſadors, are plain indications of his abilities, and how difficult it was to deceive him. Was I writing the hiſtory of England at large, I ſhould ſay much more of him, which would equally excite our wonder and praiſe; but, as what I have been ſaying of this prince properly relates only to his principal action, namely, his war with France, I ſhall now deſcribe his other qualifications, which though not ſo glaring, are no leſs worthy of admiration, than the glorious ſucceſſes which have almoſt wholly engroſſed the attention of the public. It is certain he had all the endowments of body and mind, requiſite to form a great man. His ſtature was tall and majeſtic, though a little too ſlender, and long-necked. His hair

was

was black, and his eyes of the ſame colour, were exceedingly lively. He was ſtrong and robuſt, very expert in all bodily exerciſes; chaſte, temperate, at leaſt, after he came to the crown; inured to hardſhips, and patient of hunger and thirſt, heat and cold. In all this, he was a ſtanding example to his troops of moderation, and conſtancy. He was a great lover of juſtice, following it himſelf, and cauſing it to be punctually obſerved; religious, without diſguiſe, perſevering in piety, conſtant in his private, as well as public devotions, and a great protector of the church and clergy: theſe qualities won him the eſteem and affection of the eccleſiaſtics, who did not a little contribute to heighten the luſtre of his glory. He was prudent in council, bold in undertaking, and reſolute in executing. As for his valour, he gave continual proofs of it through the whole courſe of his life. There is another thing likewiſe for which he ought to be praiſed; he

he cauſed military diſcipline to reflouriſh, which was always intirely neglected in England ſince the reign of Edward the Third. Never did the Engliſh nation ſhine with ſuch luſtre as under this renowned prince. To this may be added, he was ſo fortunate as to end his days in the midſt of his proſperity, and not to ſee, with Edward the Third, the fruits of all his labours deſtroyed.

The French hiſtorians, aggravated perhaps by malice and envy, accuſe him of cruelty and barbarity, exceſſive pride and avarice, though without any real foundation.

By Catherine of France, his queen, Henry left but one ſon of his own name, about eight or nine months old. The queen, his widow, forgetting ſhe had been wife of ſo great a prince, and deſcended from the moſt illuſtrious houſe in Europe, married, ſome time after, Owen Tudor, a Welch gentleman.

The king was ſeized with a flux, but hoping the diſtemper would wear off, he was taken in a litter to go and head the army; but his illneſs ſtill increaſing, he declined it. In a few days his phyſicians found him at the point of death, but expecting his approaching diſſolution with great firmneſs. This great prince expired on the 31ſt of Auguſt, in the 34th year of his age, after a triumphant reign of nine years, five months, and eleven days. His body was brought into England, and buried at Weſtminſter among his anceſtors, with a funeral pomp ſuitable to the grandeur he enjoyed whilſt alive, and of the eſteem conceived of him by his ſubjects. His queen, to honour in a particular manner the memory of ſo illuſtrious a ſpouſe, cauſed to be laid on his tomb a ſtatue of ſilver gilt, large as life.

HENRY VI.

SURNAMED OF WINDSOR.

Anno 1422. THIS prince, when he came to the crown, was but nine months old; the kingdom was governed by a regent or protector, during the non-age of the king. The various revolutions that happened during the reign of this weak and unhappy prince, may be ſeen at large in the moſt candid manner, related by that impartial hiſtorian Rapin. His reign was a ſcene of blood and confuſion, partly from his own incapacity to rule over a free people, and partly by the miſconduct of thoſe who took the reins of government into their hands.

He reigned thirty-eight years, without his ever intermeddling with the adminiſtration of the public affairs. It does not appear that he was upon any occaſion much moved with events, which, however,

ever, were for the moſt part ſuch as would affect a prince of a different character.

He was fitter for a private life than a crown; his great and only defect was a natural imbecility, which rendered him incapable to govern of himſelf: ever ruled by thoſe who managed the affairs in his name, his capacity reached not to ſee the conſequences of the counſels given him, which to him ſeemed always good. Herein he was different from the king his father, whoſe genius was always ſuperior to that of his miniſters. As to the reſt, he was chaſte, temperate, extremely religious, abhorring injuſtice and cruelty. It was theſe virtues, that have ſerved for foundation to the praiſes beſtowed on him by ſome hiſtorians, and which have made ſome conſider him as a true ſaint. Indeed theſe virtues would have rendered him an accompliſhed prince, had they been attended with the qualifications of a ſovereign. But, being alone, they ſerved

only to make him an honeſt man, and withal a very *indifferent* king, to ſay no worſe. His incapacity rendered him contemptible to his ſubjects. But the innocency of his life never ſuffered their contempt to turn into hatred.

During the firſt years of his reign his affairs were in a proſperous ſtate, becauſe they were managed by the dukes of Bedford and Glouceſter, his uncles, princes of great abilities, and who had his intereſt at heart. And if even in their life-time his affairs began to decline, it may be ſaid to be owing, not ſo much to their fault, as to ſome unforeſeen accidents, which all the prudence in the world could not have prevented. After the death of the duke of Bedford, Henry ſuffered himſelf to be governed by the cardinal of Wincheſter, and the duke of Suffolk; who acting not by the ſame motives, and regarding only their own affairs, completed his ruin. Afterwards, queen Margaret, by her uncommon

common abilities might have reſtored his affairs; but the king's glory, and the nation's intereſt, were leaſt in her thoughts. Her ſole view was to graſp all the power, and uſe the king's name to authorize her paſſions. The miniſters ſhe employed were all of the ſame character; it is not therefore ſtrange that the king's affairs ſhould run ſo ſwiftly into confuſion.

The death of the duke of Glouceſter will be an indelible ſtain in Margaret's reputation, and unhappily this crime reflected but too much upon the king himſelf, ſince he had not the reſolution to oppoſe it, or puniſh the authors. Accordingly, it was manifeſt that heaven took public vengeance of this murder, by the civil wars which enſued, and which occaſioned the ruin of the king, the queen, the prince their ſon, and the whole houſe of Lancaſter.

Henry VI. was thirty-nine years old when he was diſpoſſeſſed of a crown which he

he had enjoyed almoſt from his birth. He ſtill lived long enough to be the ſport of fortune. Edward his ſon, prince of Wales, was in his nineteenth year at the time of this cataſtrophe.

EDWARD

EDWARD IV.

Anno 1461. WHEN Edward aſcended the throne, he was one of the handſomeſt men in England, and perhaps in Europe: this is acknowledged by all. His noble mien, his free and eaſy air, his affable carriage, prepoſſeſſed every one in his favour. Theſe qualities, joined to an undaunted courage, gained him among the people an eſteem and affection, extremely ſerviceable to him in many circumſtances of life. Philip de Commines affirms, he owed his reſtoration to the throne (from which he had been depoſed, and impriſoned by Henry VI.) to the inclinations the principal London ladies had for him; but that would have been inconſiderable, had he not likewiſe acquired the affection of their huſbands, and in general of moſt part of the Engliſh. If he had not depended upon the hearts

hearts of the people, he would never have ventured to attempt the recovery of the throne, with the help of two thouſand men, who were moſtly foreigners. For ſome time he was exceedingly liberal, but at laſt became covetous, not ſo much from his natural temper, as from a neceſſity to ſupply the immoderate expences into which he was thrown by his pleaſures. Though he had a great extent of wit and ſolid judgment, he committed, however, ſeveral very great errors. The firſt was, when he ſuffered himſelf to be ſurpriſed by the earl of Warwick; but that fault was in a great meaſure repaired by the dexterity and readineſs wherewith he freed himſelf from the archbiſhop of York. The ſecond was, to truſt ſuch perſons as betrayed him, and were ſold to France. The third, to ſuffer himſelf to be ſo long deceived by Lewis the Eleventh, who was univerſally exclaimed againſt for his ill faith. Moſt hiſtorians have extremely aggravated this error,

error, as being ignorant, that from the year 1480 he began to take meaſures to make war upon Lewis, as appears in hiſtory. Two other errors are alſo aſcribed to him, which may be more eaſily excuſed. The firſt is, his breaking off the war with France for an inconſiderable ſum, at a time when he might have flattered himſelf with the hopes of ſucceſs: but if the circumſtances of this affair be well examined, it will be eaſily ſeen, that being forſaken by the dukes of Burgundy and Bretagne, his allies, it would have been very raſh to purſue, with his own forces alone, the execution of ſo great an enterprize, which probably would have proved unſucceſsful. Another error laid to his charge, is, his not joining with the heireſs of Burgundy, to ſtop the progreſs of the king of France. I own that was a real fault; however, it may be conſiderably leſſened by the examples of ſeveral princes, eminent for their abilities, who obſerved

the ſame conduct on the like occaſions. Uncertain of the events, princes often imagine they ſhall be great gainers by ſetting their neighbours at variance, in hopes of their weakening one another; but the ſucceſs ſometimes happens not to anſwer the expectation.

Theſe are properly political faults, which are often conſidered as ſuch only, from the events, which are not in men's power. But the crimes Edward is moſt juſtly charged with, are, his cruelty, perjury, and incontinence. The firſt appears in the great number of princes and lords whom, after taking them priſoners, he put to death on the ſcaffold. If ever there was room to exerciſe mercy in caſe of rebellion, it was at that fatal time, when it was almoſt impoſſible to ſtand neuter, and ſo difficult to chooſe the juſteſt ſide between the two houſes that were contending for the crown: and yet we do not find Edward had any regard to that conſideration.

tion. The death of the prince of Wales, ſon of Henry VI. murdered almoſt in his preſence; and that of Henry himſelf, notwithſtanding his innocence, may perhaps be juſtified in ſome meaſure by thoſe who think nothing unlawful when a throne is in queſtion, but they will never be excuſed by thoſe who have any tincture of religion. As for the death of the duke of Clarence, I do not know whether it would be poſſible to find the leaſt ſoftening if it be true, as it is very probable that he was innocent.

Edward's breach of faith was viſible in the unjuſt puniſhment of the lord Wells, and his brother-in-law, after drawing them out of ſanctuary by a ſafe-conduct; in that of the baſtard of Faulconbridge, whoſe crime he had pardoned; and, laſtly, in his oath at York, taken even with an intention to break it. All theſe actions are of the number of thoſe that can be excuſed only by reaſons of ſtate; a weak excuſe in things

where honour and religion are concerned.

As for Edward's incontinency, his whole life may be ſaid to have been one continued ſcene of luſt. He had many concubines, but eſpecially three, of whom he ſaid, one was the merrieſt, the other the wittieſt, and the third the holieſt in the world, for ſhe was always in a church but when he ſent for her. He had, however, but two natural children, both by Elizabeth Lucy (to whom he is ſaid to have been contracted before his marriage), and Elizabeth, wife of Sir Thomas Lumley. I ſhall ſay nothing of Edward's religion, ſince hiſtorians mention it only in relating his death-bed diſcourſes.

What is moſt ſurpriſing in the life of this prince, is his good fortune, which ſeems to be almoſt miraculous. He was raiſed to the throne after the loſs of two battles: the firſt, by the duke his father; the other by the earl of Warwick, then devoted

devoted to the houſe of York. The head of his father was ſtill upon the walls of York, when the ſon was proclaimed in London. Edward eſcaped, as it were by miracle, out of his confinement at Middleham; he was reſtored to the throne, or at leaſt received into London, at his return from Holland (where he fled for ſafety), before he had vanquiſhed the earl of Warwick, and while his fortune yet depended upon the deciſion of a battle, which that nobleman was ready to give him. In a word, he was ever victorious in all the battles where he was preſent.

Elizabeth his wife brought him a numerous iſſue; three princes, and eight princeſſes.

When he found himſelf ſeized with a diſorder that was likely to prove mortal, he beheld, with another eye than before, whatever had ingroſſed him during his paſt life, and it is pretended he ſhewed marks of a ſincere repentance; but, in the laſt

moments, the great Searcher of hearts alone can perfectly judge of the ſentiments expreſſed by the tongue.

Edward died on the 9th of April, in the 42d year of his age, after a reign of 22 years. The cauſe of his death is variouſly reported: ſome accuſe the duke of Glouceſter with poiſoning him; but this accuſation, being groundleſs, ought not to be lightly credited. The moſt probable opinion is, that he died of a ſurfeit, being uſed to divert his cares with exceſſive eating and drinking.

EDWARD

EDWARD V.

Anno 1483. AFTER the death of Edward IV. the prince his eldeſt ſon, between 12 and 13 years of age, was proclaimed king, by the name of Edward the Fifth. The reign of this prince was ſhort and unfortunate; if the two months and twelve days that he bore the title of king, and which were wholly ſpent in depriving him of the crown, even before he had ſolemnly received it, is not rather to be deemed an interregnum: however, ſhort as it was, he was generally acknowledged for ſovereign of England. Hiſtorians have made no ſcruple to rank him among the kings of England.

The whole ſubject of this reign conſiſts only of the means uſed by the duke of Glouceſter to diſpoſſeſs the young king his nephew, and place himſelf on the throne, by the moſt deteſtable practices.

RICHARD III.

SURNAMED CROOKBACK.

Anno 1483. RICHARD the Third was surnamed Crookback, becauſe he was ſo in reality; moreover, one of his arms was almoſt withered, receiving but little or no nouriſhment. As to the defects of his mind, if we believe moſt hiſtorians, they were ſo great and ſo numerous, that it would be difficult to find in hiſtory a prince of ſo ill a character. It is certain he had a boundleſs ambition, which often cauſed him to commit actions unbecoming a chriſtian prince. To this paſſion alone muſt be aſcribed his treachery and cruelty, ſince he was treacherous and cruel only with reſpect to the acquiſition or preſervation of the crown. He has not been the ſole prince whom ambition has led into the like exceſſes. The hiſtorians who

who wrote in the reign of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. have ſo aggravated the heinouſneſs of his actions, that one cannot help obſerving, in their writings, a ſtrong deſire to pleaſe the monarchs then on the throne: nay, very probably they have aſcribed ſome actions upon no very good foundation; for inſtance, his murdering with his own hand Henry VI. and the prince of Wales. Their deſire to ſay a great deal of ill of this prince, made them overlook his good qualities, which ought not to be paſſed over in ſilence. Be this as it will, without pretending either to juſtify him upon what he did of ill, or condemn him generally upon all, as ſome have done; I ſhall content myſelf with blaming what was blameworthy, and acknowledging withal what deſerved condemnation. The crimes he was guilty of, in procuring or keeping the crown, are, as I ſaid, effects and conſequences of his immoderate ambition by which he ſuf-

fered himſelf to be blinded; but their being produced by that paſſion, does not in the leaſt leſſen their heinouſneſs. As to the reſt, he had a great deal of ſenſe, and a very ſolid judgment; qualities that might have been an honour to him, had they been uſed to better purpoſes. We may judge of his good ſenſe and penetration, by his precautions to ſecure himſelf from the aſſaults of his enemies. Theſe precautions could not be more juſt, if divine Providence had not been pleaſed to render them fruitleſs, as it ſometimes does with reſpect to ſeemingly the beſt concerted deſigns. On ſeveral occaſions, he ſhewed an uncommon valour, and particularly in the famous battle of Boſworth, where he was ſlain: this cannot be denied him, without injuſtice. He expreſſed great concern that juſtice ſhould be impartially adminiſtered to all his ſubjects without diſtinction, provided the preſervation of the crown was not concerned, for in that reſpect

ſpect he made no ſcruple to trample upon all the rules of right and equity. This natural inclination for juſtice, but combated by his ambition, may afford ſome occaſion to preſume he would perhaps have proved a good king, had he been able to fix himſelf ſo firmly in the throne, as to have feared no revolution: at leaſt, this cannot be ſaid to be improbable. The emperor Auguſtus, who was guilty of ſo many cruelties to arrive at the empire, affords a memorable and well-known inſtance of ſuch a change, and it would not be impoſſible to find other examples. But as Richard was taken out of the world before he had given any ſigns of amendment, his ill actions abſorbed whatever there might be commendable in him. There is one hiſtorian, however, who has endeavoured to vindicate this prince; but as he has ſet no bounds to this vindication, and laboured to make him intirely innocent, he has not acquired much credit, eſpe-

cially as he was often obliged, in order to attain his ends, to advance facts not ſtrictly true. He has, however, a place in the collection of the Engliſh hiſtorians, but no modern author has thought fit to take him for a guide.

The war that commenced thirty years before, was at length ended by the battle of Boſworth, after deſtroying above one hundred thouſand Engliſhmen, and a great number of princes of the two contending houſes of York and Lancaſter.

Richard's crown, being found by a ſoldier in the field of battle, was brought to the lord Stanley, who immediately placed it on the earl of Richmond's head; and the king's body was found among the ſlain in Boſworth field, ſtark naked, covered with blood and dirt, and in that condition thrown acroſs a horſe, with the head hanging on one ſide, and the legs on the other, and ſo carried to Leiceſter. The body lay two whole days expoſed to public view,

view, after which it was interred without any ceremony in one of the churches of that city. Some time after, Henry the Seventh, his enemy and ſucceſſor, ordered a more honourable monument to be erected for him, on account of Elizabeth his queen, who was of the houſe of York.

HENRY

HENRY VII.

Anno 1485. IF the hiſtory of this reign be read with never ſo little attention, it will eaſily be perceived, that Henry's views were but two. The firſt was, to keep the crown, acquired by extraordinary good fortune, and perhaps unthought of before he was invited into England by the duke of Buckingham. The other was, to accumulate riches. As he never ſuffered himſelf to be diverted by other thoughts, his whole application centered upon one ſingle object, namely, upon thoroughly examining every thing that could have any relation to the two ends he had propoſed. Ambition, honour, glory, love, pleaſures, and all the other paſſions which generally diſquiet the hearts of ſome princes, made but little impreſſion upon his. Content with enjoying his crown, he thought neither of new acquiſitions, nor of rendering his name illuſtrious

illuſtrious by great actions. All his thoughts were confined to prevent or defeat the deſigns of his domeſtic enemies, or to well fill his coffers. He had a wonderful ſagacity, to diſcover, in the affairs that occurred, the ſide from whence ſome advantage could be drawn. This is what he plainly ſhewed in the affair of Bretagne, in his pretended wars with France and Scotland, and even in his domeſtic troubles, which by his addreſs turned all to his profit.

Though he was ſometimes forced to take arms, never prince loved peace more than he. As he had no ambition, he ſaw no advantage for him in war: on the contrary, he conſidered, that all the events of war, whether foreign or domeſtic, were againſt him. The former could, at moſt, but procure him ſome glory and acquiſitions abroad, of which he was not very fond; and, by the latter, he might be a great loſer: beſides, a time of commotions afforded

forded no opportunities to accumulate riches. So laying down this fixed principle of his policy, not to engage in any war, without an abſolute neceſſity, he never ſwerved from it. It is this that made him unconcernedly behold the loſs of Bretagne, and, without reſentment, ſuffer the inſults of the king of Scotland, becauſe it was not from the war that he intended to reap any advantage, but only from the preparations that were to be made to ſupport it.

However, this policy would have been unſeaſonable when he was attacked by domeſtic enemies, whoſe aim was to rob him of his crown. As his all was then at ſtake, he cheerfully faced the danger, though with all the precautions poſſible not to run any hazards. He won two battles upon the rebels, one at Stoke, the other at Blackheath; but in both he was very ſuperior in number of troops, and fought againſt perſons ill armed, and unſkilled in the art of war; ſo it cannot be ſaid what he would

would have done, had he been oppoſed with equal forces: it is no leſs difficult to know, whether it was owing to his courage that he headed his army in perſon, or to his diſtruſt of thoſe that ſerved him: however this be, he was always fortunate in his domeſtic wars, and thereby gained ſo great a reputation, that all the princes of Europe earneſtly courted his alliance. On the other hand, the eſteem foreigners expreſſed for him did not a little contribute to render him formidable to his ſubjects; I ſay formidable, for it is certain he was never beloved. In a word, his method of governing, which approached to arbitrary power, eſpecially towards the end of his reign, his inſatiable avarice, his haughtineſs, his pride, and his dark and reſerved temper, were no proper qualities to win the affection of his people.

He never opened his mind to any man, except perhaps to one or two of his miniſters. As for the reſt, he ſet them to work,

work, without their knowing themſelves the motives of their own proceedings. The world was ſo perſuaded, he had always ſome hidden deſign, even in his moſt indifferent actions, that what was only a pure effect of chance, was often aſcribed to his policy.

His ſpies in foreign courts gave him an extenſive knowledge of all that paſſed there. On the other hand, his ambaſſadors were always charged to inform themſelves, by all ſorts of ways, of the ſecrets of the princes to whom they were ſent. Very often this was the principal article of their inſtructions. By this means he made ſuch diſcoveries as enabled him to convince the foreign miniſters, reſiding at his court, of his great inſight into their maſters' affairs; hence he reaped many conſiderable advantages, chiefly in that the princes of Europe, fearing his abilities, were very forward to live in good underſtanding with him. His ſtrict friendſhip with Ferdinand king of Arragon, a prince of much the

ſame

ſame character, was extremely uſeful to him: probably it hindered the court of France from interpoſing more in the affairs of England, and was one of the principal cauſes of his conſtant peace with his neighbours.

Inſtead of increaſing the credit of the nobility, he took all poſſible care to leſſen it. His council was almoſt wholly compoſed of churchmen and lawyers, who, being devoted to him, and aiming only to pleaſe him, never oppoſed his will. This unlimited compliance of his council was the cauſe of his addicting himſelf to his natural paſſion of heaping up money, there being no perſon about him that had boldneſs or conſcience enough to give him good advice upon that head. This conduct drew on him the hatred of the Engliſh, which at firſt made him ſomething uneaſy; but when he had ſurmounted all his troubles, he regarded it not; on the contrary, he affected to rule with an abſolute

lute power, making of his council a court of juſtice, where all the pleas of the crown were decided; which had never been ſeen before.

He has been extremely praiſed for the good laws made in his reign, as if he had been the ſole legiſlator, and his parliament no-ways concerned; hence perhaps was given him the glorious name of the Solomon of England, though he much more reſembled that prince in the heavy yoke he laid on his people. But if theſe laws are carefully examined, it will doubtleſs be found, that the king's intereſt was the true motive, though in appearance they ſeemed to be made for the good of the people. Thus did William the Conqueror formerly act, whom our Henry reſembled in ſo many things, that they may be very juſtly compared. In ſhort, Henry's moſt diſtinguiſhing character was, that he lived intirely for himſelf, conſidered things only with reſpect to his own private intereſt,

and

and regarded not any affairs where that was not concerned. Indeed ſuch a character is not uncommon among princes; but he had this in particular, that whereas the intereſts of other princes are uſually divided into ſeveral branches, Henry's was in a manner contained in one ſingle branch, namely, to have always full coffers.

He was extremely ſuſpicious, as thoſe generally are who act by ſecret ways, becauſe they think all the world like themſelves. The houſe of York's title, and the people's opinion concerning it, filled his mind with fears and ſuſpicions, with which he was continually racked. It is true, he took great care to conceal his uneaſineſs; but his conduct and precautions plainly demonſtrated his mind was not, as he would have had it thought to be, at reſt. This perpetual diſtruſt led him inceſſantly to ſeek means to prevent the danger, in which he was not always ſucceſsful. Witneſs the report he cauſed

to

to be ſpread, that the duke of York was alive, which had a quite contrary effect to what he expected. His genius was but mean. He ſaw better near, than at a diſtance; and his wiſdom conſiſted more in extricating himſelf out of difficulties, than in finding means to avoid them. The chief troubles of his reign may be ſaid to happen by his fault: however, he acquired, by long experience, qualities which by nature he had not.

It is not ſurpriſing that a prince, always intent upon preventing the rebellion of his ſubjects, and continually employed in heaping up money, ſhould have performed nothing glorious for himſelf or the kingdom. Conquerors do not always make the greateſt kings; on the contrary, peace would have been very advantageous to the Engliſh, had it rendered them happy; but it was ſtill more fatal to them than war itſelf, ſince the king's inſatiable avarice carried him to deviſe means to accumulate

riches, which could be done only at their expence. There are princes who heap up money ſolely to diſperſe it; but Henry kept it carefully in his coffers, without any communication. Liberality was a virtue he did not pretend to: if he made any preſents, it was only to ſpies and informers.

As for his religion and morals, nothing certain can be affirmed, by reaſon of the contrarieties which met in him. He was chaſte, temperate, an enemy to open and ſcandalous vices, conſtant in the exerciſes of devotion, and obſerving ſtrict juſtice where his intereſt was not concerned: but, on the other hand, his extreme avarice made him commit many acts of injuſtice; and the fear of loſing his crown cauſed him to conſider, as lawful, all means which could free him from that danger, how unjuſt ſoever they might be in other reſpects. The earl of Warwick's death will be an everlaſting ſtain to his memory.

His

His making a jeſt of religion, in cauſing a ſolemn proceſſion to be made, in order to ſhew that prince to the people; and the excommunications he ordered to be pronounced againſt his own ſpies, are clear evidences that his religion was not proof againſt his intereſt.

In general, it cannot be denied this prince had great abilities; but as theſe abilities centered only in himſelf, they would have been more valuable in a private perſon than in a great monarch. Though all his projects were crowned with ſucceſs, his reign cannot be ſaid to have been happy either for himſelf or for England. He lived under continual fears and ſuſpicions, and his ſubjects were always expoſed either to domeſtic troubles or oppreſſion. One thing rendered this reign remarkable, namely, that by Henry's abilities, the civil wars, which had ſo long afflicted England, were at length happily ended; I ſay happily, ſince it was very

indifferent,

indifferent, with reſpect to the welfare of the Engliſh, whether the kingdom was governed by a prince of the houſe of Lancaſter, or a prince of the houſe of York.

Henry the Seventh was of a ſerious temper, ever thoughtful, and intent upon his affairs, without being diverted by his pleaſures, to which he was little addicted. He had a book, wherein he marked down with his own hand the qualities and characters of the perſons he knew, in order to employ them upon occaſion. A monkey, that he kept in his chamber, having one day tore this note-book all to pieces, he appeared grieved as at ſome very great loſs.

He was of ſtature taller than the common ſort; his face was long, thin, and lean, like the reſt of his body, but withal very grave, which made people ſpeak to him with fear: he could, however, be affable when his affairs required. He was rather ſtudious than learned: what he read

in his leiſure hours was generally French, though he underſtood Latin too.

He founded a chapel at Windſor; but of all his ſtructures, that which did and ſtill does him the greateſt honour is his chapel in Weſtminſter-Abbey, which gives not place in any reſpect to the moſt ſtately chapels in Chriſtendom. There he was buried, and there the bodies of his ſucceſſors lie with his.

He died at Richmond, 22 April 1509, having lived 52 years, and reigned 23 years.

HENRY

HENRY VIII.

Anno 1509. HENRY the Eighth, ſon and ſucceſſor of Henry the Seventh, came to the crown at the age of 18 years. The lord Herbert, his hiſtorian, ſays, the king his father deſigned him at firſt for the archbiſhoprick of Canterbury, becauſe having an elder ſon, there was no likelihood that this would aſcend the throne; and therefore care was taken to inſtruct him in all the parts of learning neceſſary for a prince that was one day to be a churchman: but as the young prince was become his heir apparent at the age of eleven years, it could not be with the ſame view that he cauſed him to purſue the ſtudy of ſuch parts of learning as were proper for a clergyman. It is more likely, therefore, that the king his father kept him to his ſtudies, for fear his active and fiery ſpirit ſhould carry him to more dangerous em-

ployments. He took a great reliſh for learning in his younger years, and preſerved it ever after. He always delighted in peruſing good books, and converſing with the learned, even when the multitude of his affairs ſeemed to divert him from ſuch kind of employments: by theſe means he made advances in the ſciences very uncommon in a great prince.

His knowledge, which was conſidered as a great accompliſhment even in ordinary perſons, had upon the young prince an effect which is not unuſual; it gave him a good opinion of himſelf, which had but too much influence upon all the actions of his life. The exceſſive commendations beſtowed upon him by all, helped to confirm him in this conceit. When he was yet unexperienced in the affairs of ſtate, he fancied himſelf very able, and this preſumption was the cauſe of his being often the dupe of thoſe princes with whom he was concerned.

But

But in remarking that this prince had a great deal of ſelf-conceit, I don't pretend to rob him of, or any-ways leſſen, the noble qualities he had from nature or education. In his youth, he was very handſome, and expert in all bodily exerciſes, as much as, or more than any prince of his time: accordingly, he was paſſionately fond of all thoſe diverſions which gave him an opportunity to ſhew his activity. He was courageous without oſtentation, of a free, open temper, and an enemy to fraud and inſincerity, ſcorning to uſe indirect means to compaſs his ends. His liberality was perhaps as much too great, as the king his father's avarice: Henry the Seventh ſeemed to have been ſolicitous to accumulate riches, only to afford his ſon the pleaſure to ſquander them away without any diſcretion.

Whatever good qualities ſeemed to predominate in his youth, his reign was long, but full of troubles, and, amidſt a variety

of revolutions, marked with bloodſhed and vindictive cruelties, from a haughty, unforgiving ſpirit, as the many who ſuffered on the ſcaffold can beſt teſtify. His reign was chequered with a variety of melancholy events, and few of them to his credit.

After a reign of thirty-ſeven years and nine months, the king was ſeized in his bed with an illneſs which brought him inſenſibly to his end. However, the conſideration of the account he was going to render to God, was not capable of moving him to uſe compaſſion to the duke of Norfolk and the earl of Surrey, of one of the moſt ancient families in England, who had done him great ſervices, and hitherto were guilty of no crime that deſerved ſo ſevere a puniſhment. On this occaſion, as on many others, paſſion and policy prevailed in the king's mind over juſtice and mercy. He was bent at any rate to ſacrifice theſe two lords to the ſcaffold, to enſure his

ſon's

ſon's ſafety, and to eſtabliſh, by their deaths, all the alterations he had made in religion, being perſuaded they would uſe their utmoſt endeavours to deſtroy them. The ſequel plainly ſhewed he was not miſtaken with regard to the duke of Norfolk, who ſurvived him. This lord's life, preſerved by a ſort of miracle, was a demonſtration how vain are human precautions, when contrary to the decrees of Providence.

The king's illneſs continually increaſed, and no man dared to warn him of his approaching end; every one was afraid that a prince, who was always approached with trembling, would look upon this charitable warning as a crime, and puniſh it according to an act of parliament, by which thoſe who ſhould dare to foretel the king's death were adjudged traitors. But at length Sir Anthony Denny, one of his privy-counſellors, had the courage and charity to warn him, that he had but a

few hours to live. The king thanked him, and expreſſed his great grief and horror for all the ſins of his paſt life: whereupon Denny aſked him if any clergyman ſhould be ſent for; and he ſaid, If any, it ſhould be the archbiſhop of Canterbury. But Cranmer, being then at Croydon, could not come till the king was ſpeechleſs. He had but juſt time to deſire him to give ſome ſign of his dying in the faith of Chriſt. The king ſqueezed his hand, and preſently after expired, in the night, in the 56th year of his age.

EDWARD

EDWARD VI.

Anno 1547. EDWARD the Sixth, only ſon and ſucceſſor to Henry the Eighth, was nine years and three months old when he aſcended the throne, by the death of the king his father. His majority was fixed to the 18th year of his age, by the late king's will, but he died before he came to it, after a ſhort reign of ſix years and five months. The hiſtory therefore of theſe ſix years, as may be eaſily judged, will not be ſo much the hiſtory of the king himſelf, as of his governors and miniſters. There was reaſon to hope extraordinary things from this young prince, had it pleaſed God to bleſs him with a longer life.

He had an excellent memory, a wonderful ſolidity of mind, and withal he was laborious, ſparing no pains to qualify himſelf for the well governing of his king-

dom. At eight years of age he wrote Latin letters to his father, French was as familiar to him as Engliſh. He learned alſo Greek, Spaniſh, and Italian. After that he applied himſelf to the liberal ſciences, wherein he made an aſtoniſhing progreſs. Cardan, who ſaw him in his fifteenth year, ſpeaks of him as the wonder of the age. The teſtimony of this great philoſopher was the leſs ſuſpicious, as it was after the young prince's death that he publiſhed his praiſes, and in Italy, where his memory was odious.

As ſoon as Henry VIII. had reſigned his laſt breath, the young prince Edward had notice ſent him to come to London. He was then with his ſiſter, the princeſs Elizabeth, at Hartford, from whence the deputies from the council conducted him to Endfield. Here they informed him of the king's death, and paid their reſpects to him as their ſovereign. After that they attended him to the Tower of London, where

where he was received by the council in a body, and proclaimed king the ſame day, the 31ſt of January, 1547.

The young king, in January, 1553, was ſeized with a diſtemper, which at length brought him to his grave. When his illneſs increaſed, without the poſſibility of finding any remedy, the council thought fit to diſmiſs the phyſicians, and put him into the hands of a certain woman, who undertook his cure. It was ſaid this was done by the duke of Northumberland's advice, and that the woman ſhortened the king's days. But he was now ſo ill, that it was entirely needleſs to haſten his death. It is true, the woman, inſtead of curing him, only put him to more pain by the medicines ſhe gave him; and this was ſufficient to inſpire the people with violent ſuſpicions of the duke of Northumberland, who was not beloved, and was thought capable of any thing. At laſt the phyſicians were ſent for again; but it

was not in their power to ſtop the violence of his diſtemper, which carried him out of the world on the 6th of July, after his giving ſenſible proofs of true piety.

QUEEN

QUEEN MARY.

Anno 1553. DURING the bloody reign of this bigoted queen, the moſt cruel acts were committed. In the year 1556 was a continual and violent perſecution of the Proteſtants. This year archbiſhop Cranmer ſuffered martyrdom, and with ſhame and confuſion retracted at the ſtake, and reſolved the hand which had ſigned the fatal abjuration ſhould firſt ſuffer. He held it extended in the fire, till it dropped off, and then was obſerved to beat his breaſt with the other. His heart was found entire in the aſhes, after the whole body was conſumed: which occaſioned many reflections.

The furious biſhop Bonner, who had the care of puniſhing heretics, not contented to burn them, one by one, ſent them in troops to the flames; ſo that in the year 1566, eighty-five periſhed by his barbarity.

barity. The very women were not ſpared, and the fury of the perſecutors fell upon innocent infants. In the iſle of Guernſey, a woman big with child being condemned to be burnt, and the violence of the fire burſting her womb, a boy fell into the flames, which being ſnatched out by one, more merciful than the reſt, was, after a ſhort conſultation, thrown in again, by command of the magiſtrates who aſſiſted at the execution.

Cardinal Pole (a bigoted and bloody prieſt) viſited both the univerſities. While he was at Cambridge, Bucer and Fagius, two German divines (dead ſome years before), were ridiculouſly cited to appear before the commiſſioners, to give an account of their faith, and upon their not appearing, both were condemned to be burnt. This ſentence was followed by a warrant from the court to execute it, and the two bodies, in their coffins, were tied to ſtakes, and conſumed to aſhes.

At

At Oxford, Peter Martyr's wife was dug out of her grave, by order of the council, and buried in a dung-hill, becauſe having been a nun, ſhe had broke her vow by marriage.

Biſhop Gardiner (another bigoted prieſt) was for burning all, and frequently was heard to ſay, it was in vain to lop off the branches, while the tree was ſuffered to ſtand. The queen was a bigot to the laſt degree. It gave her no remorſe to ſpill human blood, when religion was the pretence. At this time the ſpirit of perſecution rendered men deaf to reaſon, juſtice, and humanity: but God, who has ſet bounds to the ſea, beyond which it cannot paſs, reſtrains alſo the fury of perſecutors, and prevents them from maſſacreing the innocent, though nothing (but her death, which was near approaching) could alter the ſentiments, or reſtrain the fury of this bigoted queen.

About

About the beginning of the year 1558, the perſecutions were renewed with greater fury than ever; the queen herſelf exceeding her prerogative, publiſhed a proclamation, "That whoever had any heretical "books, and did not preſently burn them, "without reading, ſhould be eſteemed re-"bels, and executed without delay." On the other hand, ſhe expreſsly forbid to pray for thoſe who were executed, or even to ſay, God help them.

This cauſed the author of the Hiſtory of the Reformation judiciouſly to remark, that it was not ſo much the converſion, as the deſtruction of thoſe they called heretics, that the biſhops deſired. A convincing proof of this was ſeen ſhortly after; one Benbridge being tied to the ſtake, through the violence of the flames, cried out, I recant: whereupon the ſheriff ordered the fire to be immediately extinguiſhed, and the ſufferer ſigned an abjuration, dictated to him: but ſoon after the ſheriff received

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an order from court to burn the condemned perſon, and to come to London himſelf, where he was committed to priſon.

The fury of the perſecutors was ſo extreme, that though they were going to loſe the queen, they ceaſed not theſe ſeverities. About a week before her death, five perſons were burnt at Canterbury, and in this laſt year of her reign thirty-nine Proteſtants ſuffered martyrdom in ſeveral places. Authors are not agreed concerning the number of thoſe who died in the flames during Mary's reign; thoſe who ſay the leaſt, reckon 284, but others affirm, that in the two firſt years of the perſecution, 800 were put to death.

The exceſſive bigotry of queen Mary is evident from the hiſtory of her reign. To this ſhe joined a temper cruel and vindictive, which ſhe endeavoured to confound with zeal for religion. But, when it was not poſſible to unite them, ſhe plainly ſhewed ſhe was inclined to cruelty,

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as well by nature, as zeal. She had the misfortune to be encouraged in this diſpoſition by all who approached her. Biſhop Gardiner was one of the moſt revengeful men living. Biſhop Bonner was a fury; and the other biſhops were choſen from amongſt the moſt cruel and barbarous of the clergy. This was the quality by which alone a man was thought worthy of the epiſcopal dignity. The perſecutions therefore againſt the Proteſtants in this reign have nothing which ought to ſeem ſtrange. Doctor Burnet ſays, Mary had a generous diſpoſition of mind. It were to be wiſhed he had given us ſome paſſages of her life where this generoſity appeared.

She had been ſome time afflicted with a dropſy, which being much increaſed the beginning of November, carried her off the 17th of the ſame month, in the 43d year of her age, after a reign of five years, four months, and eleven days.

QUEEN

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Anno 1558. TO diſplay in a few words the eulogy of this illuſtrious queen, it ſeems to be ſufficient to obſerve, that her name is ſtill of bleſſed memory with the Engliſh, now, when flattery cannot be ſuppoſed to have any ſhare in the veneration they pay her. But Elizabeth baniſhed from England the Catholic religion, and reſtored the Reformation. This alone was the cauſe that two parties have been formed on her account, who mutually tax each other with flattery or animoſity. The Proteſtants conſidering that this queen was the ſole bulwark of their religion, which, probably, without her, would have been deſtroyed in England, Scotland, Ireland, and perhaps in France, and the Low Countries, cannot forbear giving her great commendations, and feel themſelves inclined to excuſe her failings. For the ſame reaſons the

the Roman Catholics look upon her with another eye; nay, ſome have not ſcrupled to paint her in the blackeſt colours, and give her the moſt odious epithets. This makes it impoſſible to give her a character that ſhall pleaſe all the world. I ſhall content myſelf therefore with making ſome reflections, which will aſſiſt thoſe who ſeek only truth to paſs an impartial judgment on this famous queen, free from paſſion and prejudice.

Elizabeth had great ſenſe, and a judgment naturally ſound and ſolid. This appeared in her whole conduct from the beginning to the end of her reign. Nothing ſhews her capacity more, than her addreſs in ſurmounting the difficulties and troubles created by her enemies, eſpecially when it is conſidered that theſe enemies were the moſt powerful, the moſt artful, the moſt ſubtle, and the leaſt ſcrupulous in Europe; the bare naming them is a ſufficient demonſtration. The court of Rome, under

under ſeveral popes; Philip the Second, king of Spain; the duke of Alva; Henry the Second, and Charles the Ninth, kings of France; Catherine de Medici, the duke of Guiſe, the cardinal of Lorrain, Mary, queen of Scots, all the Romiſh clergy, and particularly the Jeſuits. Had her forces been proportionable to thoſe of her enemies, united together, there would be nothing very extraordinary. Strength often ſupplies the want of capacity. But in what manner did ſhe withſtand ſo potent, ſo formidable enemies? It was by two or three maxims which ſhe made the rule of her conduct, and from which ſhe never ſwerved,—to make herſelf beloved by her people;—to be frugal of her treaſure;—to cheriſh diſſenſion among her neighbours.—If things are rightly conſidered, ſhe had no other way to ſecure herſelf. It cannot therefore be denied, that this is a clear evidence of her ability. But as her ability was never queſtioned, it is not this

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I am chiefly to deſcribe. On the contrary, her enemies have taken occaſion from thence to defame her, by repreſenting as vices diſguiſed, what her friends extol as ſo many virtues. They pretend that her ability conſiſted wholly in an overſtrained diſſimulation, and a profound hypocriſy. In a word, they ſay ſhe was a perfect comedian. For my part, I do not pretend to deny, that ſhe made great uſe of diſſimulation, as well to the courts of France and Spain, as to the queen of Scotland, and the Scots. This would be denying a manifeſt truth. The court of Rome was the only court ſhe never diſſembled with. I am alſo perſuaded, that being ſo much concerned to gain the love and eſteem of her ſubjects, ſhe affected to ſpeak frequently, and with exaggeration, of her tenderneſs for them: and deſired to have it believed, that ſhe did, through an exceſſive love to her people, things wherein her own intereſt was moſtly concerned. But the

queſtion is to know, whether in her circumſtances her diſſimulation was blameable? What injury was it to her ſubjects to endeavour to perſuade them ſhe loved them tenderly, ſince ſhe actually and really did whatever was neceſſary to convince them? As to foreigners, it muſt be carefully obſerved, that her diſſimulation and artifices tended not to invade their poſſeſſions, but to preſerve her own. Her enemies frequently attempted to deprive her both of crown and life, and ſhe ſaved both by her policy and diſſimulation. Where is the harm of ſuch a conduct? Can the diſſimulation and artifices, which aim only at ſelf-preſervation, be, without extreme prejudice, confounded with the diſſimulation and artifices that tend to ſurpriſe the innocent, and invade the property of others; can theſe, I ſay, be conſidered on the ſame footing? For my part, I am ſo far from thinking that this ſort of diſſimulation is any blemiſh to Elizabeth's

reputation,

reputation, that I rather believe it ought to be reckoned among her commendable qualities.

Avarice is another failing imputed to her by her own friends. I will not deny that ſhe was too parſimonious, and upon ſome occaſions ſtuck too cloſe to her maxim, not to be at any expence but what was abſolutely neceſſary. However, in general, I maintain that her circumſtances required her, if not to be covetous, at leaſt not to part with her money, but with the greateſt caution, both to preſerve her people's affection, and enable her to withſtand her enemies. After all, whom did ſhe wrong by her extreme frugality? A dozen of hungry courtiers, who would have been very glad ſhe had laviſhed her treaſure like the king her father in the beginning of his reign. As for the reſt of her ſubjects, inſtead of having cauſe to complain of this pretended avarice, they had reaſon to be pleaſed with it,

it, ſince it conſiſted not in robbing them of their property by illegal methods, as Henry the Seventh her grandfather had done, but in huſbanding her revenues, and conſequently their own.

She is alſo accuſed of not being ſo chaſte as ſhe affected to appear. Nay, ſome pretend there are now in England the deſcendants of a daughter ſhe had by the earl of Leiceſter. But, as hitherto no proof of the accuſation has been produced, it may be ſafely reckoned among the calumnies with which her reputation has been attacked, as well during her life, as after her death.

It is not ſo eaſy to juſtify her concerning the death of the queen of Scots; here it muſt freely be owned that ſhe ſacrificed equity, juſtice, and perhaps her own conſcience, to her ſafety. If Mary was guilty of her huſband's murder, as there is reaſon to believe, it belonged not to Elizabeth to puniſh her. And, indeed, it

was not for that ſhe took away her life, but ſhe uſed that pretence to detain her in priſon, under the deceitful excuſe of making her innocence appear. On this occaſion her diſſimulation was blameworthy. This firſt injuſtice engaged her afterwards to uſe numberleſs arts and devices to have a pretence to render Mary's impriſonment perpetual. Hence aroſe, at laſt, the neceſſity of putting her to death on the ſcaffold. In ſhort, this exceſs of violence gave birth to more artifices and acts of diſſimulation, to juſtify herſelf, and caſt the blame on the innocent.

This, doubtleſs, is Elizabeth's great blemiſh, which manifeſtly proves to what height ſhe carried the fear of loſing a tottering crown. This continual fear and uneaſineſs is what characteriſes her reign, becauſe it was the ſpring of almoſt all her actions. All that can be ſaid for Elizabeth, is, that the queen of Scots, and her friends, had brought things to ſuch a point, that one

of the two queens was to periſh, and it was natural that the weakeſt ſhould fall. But this does not excuſe Elizabeth's injuſtice to Mary, in detaining her in priſon, which had no other foundation than Elizabeth's fear concerning her crown.

I come now to Elizabeth's religion. I do not believe her being a true Proteſtant was ever queſtioned; but as it was her intereſt to be ſo, ſome have taken occaſion to doubt whether the zeal ſhe expreſſed for her religion was the effect of her perſuaſion or policy. What may have occaſioned this doubt, is, that it clearly appears in her hiſtory, that in aſſiſting the Proteſtants of France and the Netherlands, as well as thoſe of Scotland, ſhe had only temporal views, namely, her own ſafety and defence againſt impending invaſions. But it cannot thence be inferred, ſhe was not a good Proteſtant, or had no religion at all, ſince it is not impoſſible that her

religion ſhould agree with her temporal intereſt.

She is warmly accuſed of perſecuting the Catholics, and putting ſeveral to death. It is true there were ſome who ſuffered death in her reign. But one may venture to affirm, that none were puniſhed, but for conſpiring againſt the queen or ſtate, or for attempting to deſtroy the Proteſtant religion in England, and reſtore the Romiſh by violent methods. The Catholics, who lived peaceably, were tolerated, though with ſome reſtraint as to the exerciſe of their religion, but with none as to their conſciences. If this may be called perſecution, what name ſhall be given to the ſufferings of the Proteſtants in the reign of Mary?

The Preſbyterians think alſo they have reaſon to complain of the ſtatute enacted in this reign, which deprived them of liberty of conſcience, though they were Proteſtants. I ſhall not take upon me to determine,

termine, whether they had cauſe to complain of this rigour. I ſhall only ſay, that, in my opinion, they had too much obſtinacy, and their adverſaries too little charity.

To ſum up in two words, what may ſerve to form Elizabeth's character, I ſhall add, that ſhe was a good and illuſtrious queen, with many virtues, and noble qualities, and few faults. But what ſhe ought to be eſteemed for above all things, is, that ſhe cauſed the Engliſh to enjoy a felicity unknown to their anceſtors under moſt of the kings her predeceſſors. This, doubtleſs, is the teſt by which we are to judge of thoſe whom God has ſet over us.

About the end of January, 1603, Elizabeth began to feel the firſt attacks of a diſtemper, which carried her at length to her grave. Her being obliged to have the ring ſhe wore on her finger filed off, was looked upon as an ill omen, becauſe ſhe was wont to ſay, with that ring ſhe had

been married to her people. As ſhe was now very old, it was eaſily believed ſhe would not recover. Accordingly, ſome time before her death, ſhe had the mortification to ſee herſelf forſaken by moſt of her courtiers, who ſtrove with emulation to court the favour of the king her preſumptive ſucceſſor.

This threw her into a melancholy, of which it was not poſſible to conceal the cauſe, eſpecially, as it was openly talked of ſending for king James before ſhe expired. In the beginning of March, ſhe was ſeized with a heavineſs in all her limbs, which rendered her motionleſs, and even cauſed her to ſpeak with great difficulty. This was attended with great frowardneſs, ſo that ſhe could not bear any one near her, but the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who comforted her, and joined with her in prayer. In ſhort, when it was perceived ſhe was near her laſt hour, the council ſent the lord admiral, the lord privy-

privy-ſeal, and the ſecretary, to pray her to name her ſucceſſor. She faintly anſwered, that ſhe had always ſaid her throne was the throne of kings, and ſhe would have no mean perſon to ſucceed her. I will (ſaid ſhe) that a king ſucceeds me; and who ſhould that be but my neareſt kinſman the king of Scots? Then being admoniſhed by the archbiſhop to fix her thoughts upon God; that I do (ſaid ſhe), neither doth my mind wander from him at all.

When ſhe could no longer pray with her tongue, ſhe lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and giving ſome other ſigns of her confidence in the mercy of God, ſhe expired on the 24th of March, 1603, in the 70th year of her age, and the 44th year of her reign.

JAMES I.

Anno 1603. JAMES the Firſt has had for hiſtorians men very much prepoſſeſſed in his favour, or extremely prejudiced againſt him. This naturally followed from the diviſions to which he himſelf had given birth. Some repreſent him as a perfect pattern of a good king: others blacken his reputation as much as poſſible, by aggravating his failings. The reaſon of this diverſity proceeds from the hiſtory of his reign being penned at a time when the animoſity of the two parties was at the height, whence both have happened to leave in their writings evident marks of their paſſion. Therefore, the character of this prince muſt not be formed, either upon the praiſes of the one, or the invectives of the other, but upon his manner of governing, upon his ſpeeches, and actions. This might be done by turning

ing to the particular circumſtances of his reign; but to ſave the reader the trouble, I ſhall briefly relate what is ſaid on both ſides, of which he will be able to judge.

The principal ingredients in king James's panegyric, is, the conſtant peace he cauſed his ſubjects to enjoy. This cannot be ſaid to be the effect of chance, ſince it clearly appears to have been his ſole, or at leaſt chief aim in his adminiſtration. Nothing, ſay his friends, is more noble, or more worthy a great king, than ſuch a deſign. But this deſign loſes all its merit, if the prince is diſcovered by his conduct to preſerve peace only out of fear, ſupineneſs, or exceſſive love of eaſe and repoſe; and king James's whole behaviour ſhews he acted by theſe motives, though he coloured it with the pretence of affection for his people.

If ſome take care to extol his knowledge in philoſophy, divinity, hiſtory, po-

lite learning; others affirm, it was but real pedantry, and that from all his acquired knowledge, he learned only to talk very impertinently on every ſubject, inſtead of framing ſolid and ſure rules for the government of his dominions.

His liberality, which ſome praiſe, is exclaimed againſt by others, as prodigality. Theſe pretend he gave without meaſure and diſcretion, without any regard to his own wants, or the merits of thoſe on whom he heaped his favours.

The ſame contrariety occurs between king James's hiſtorians with reſpect to his capacity. Some call him, for his wiſdom, the Solomon of his age; others endeavour to diſplay all his errors, particularly in the two ſole important affairs of his reign, wherein he came off very ill, namely, the prince his ſon's marriage, and his ſon-in-law's election to the kingdom of Bohemia.

Some extol him for maintaining the prerogative royal in its full luſtre, in ſpite of

of the efforts of thoſe who were continually attacking it; others pretend he had conceived very wrong ideas of the Engliſh conſtitution, and by aiming to carry the regal authority too high, and inſtilling the ſame principles into his ſucceſſor, he was the firſt cauſe of his family's ruin. As to his manners, writers are no leſs divided; ſome deſcribe him as a very wiſe and virtuous prince, whilſt others ſpeak of him as a prince of a diſſolute life, given to drinking, and ſwearing in common converſation, eſpecially when he was in a paſſion. He is likewiſe reproached for diſſolving the earl of Eſſex's marriage, pardoning the earl and counteſs of Somerſet for the death of Sir Walter Raleigh, and for confidently calling God to witneſs, in full parliament, that he never had any thoughts of granting the Papiſts a toleration, which he could not affirm but by means of ſome mental reſervation.

In fine, whilſt ſome praiſe his moderation to the Catholics, others pretend to demonſtrate he was a Papiſt in his heart, and only profeſſed the Proteſtant religion out of fear of what might follow in caſe he openly declared for the Catholics. If ſome ſay, in proof of his being a good Proteſtant, that he made conſtant profeſſion of the eſtabliſhed religion, perſevered in it to his death, and when dying, charged the prince his ſon to protect the church and clergy; others anſwer, this is far from a demonſtration. They pretend the point is not to know what he would appear to be, but what he was in reality; and that his actions belied his outward profeſſion: that the ſame thing had happened to him in Scotland, where, to the age of thirty-ſix years, he had profeſſed a religion which he mortally hated, as plainly appeared afterwards. That when he came to England, he declared himſelf openly the protector of the papiſts; took

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their part openly on all occaſions; promoted them to honours, dignities, public offices: that in his reign the laws againſt them were never duly executed, of which he boaſted to the Catholic princes, in his apology concerning the oath of allegiance: that in all his ſpeeches, whether in the parliament, or in the ſtar-chamber, his conſtant aim was to move his ſubjects to conſent to a full toleration for the Catholics; but not finding the parliament inclined as he wiſhed, he granted, by his ſole authority, a toleration, in effect, by hindering the execution of the laws, and diſcharging the condemned recuſants from fines and other penalties: that in his conventions with Spain and France, he poſitively promiſed to cauſe no more laws to be enacted againſt the Papiſts, and thoſe already in force not to be executed: and that on all occaſions he affected to ſhew he found nothing amiſs in the Roman religion, but the pope's exorbitant

power

power over princes: that by giving the pope the titles of holy father, his holineſs, and by conſenting that his ſon's children ſhould be educated in the Romiſh religion till the age of thirteen years, he plainly diſcovered he ſhould not be ſorry for their continuance in that religion. Laſtly, his engagements with the archbiſhop of Ambrun, is a freſh and manifeſt proof of his being a true Papiſt. To this the others reply, it is not poſſible to conceive, that if king James had been a Papiſt in his heart, he would have ſpent a conſiderable part of his time in writing books againſt the Popiſh religion, and combating the arguments of Bellarmine and Du Perron.

Having related what is ſaid for and againſt king James with reſpect to his religion, I ſhall take the liberty to offer my opinion or conjecture, which is, that this prince was truly neither a ſound Proteſtant nor a good Catholic. One can hardly help owning that he had never much

much at heart the intereſt of the Proteſtant religion, as, on the other hand, it cannot be denied he made public and conſtant profeſſion of the ſame to his dying day. This induces me to think he had formed a ſcheme of religion different from that of others, according to which he counted of no moment what the Proteſtants and Catholics looked upon as eſſential. The difference between the two religions, with reſpect to the tenets, was not what affected him moſt; he believed, probably, that every religion was good, provided it taught obedience to ſovereigns, and preſerved the hierarchy, which he conſidered as a fundamental article. It is therefore no wonder that, agreeably to this ſcheme, he ſhould refuſe to enter into the meaſures of the Engliſh Proteſtants to hinder the growth of the Romiſh religion in England, or not ſcruple to continue in the religion he profeſſed, ſince, according to his notions, the

two

two religions were equally good, provided the pope's deſpotic power was aboliſhed. I ſcarce doubt that in his conferences with the archbiſhop of Ambrun, he had in view the chimerical project of reconciling the two religions, without troubling himſelf about the tenets which divided them, and which, in one of his ſpeeches, he called ſcholaſtic queſtions. But very probably, if he could have executed this project according to his ideas, all the advantage would have been on the ſide of the Romiſh religion. This, in my opinion, is the only way to excuſe his condeſcenſion to the Catholics, and his zeal to protect them; otherwiſe I do not ſee how his doubtful behaviour in regard to religion can be well accounted for.

This may alſo ſerve to diſcover the reaſon of his rejecting with ſo much animoſity the religion of the Puritans, whoſe principles he believed directly contrary to the ſcheme he had formed.

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But whatever may be ſaid for or againſt king James's perſon, it is certain England never flouriſhed leſs than in his reign, and the Engliſh ſaw themſelves expoſed to the inſults and railleries of other nations, whilſt the blame was generally caſt on the king.

About the middle of March, 1624, he was ſeized with a tertian ague, of which he had ſome fits, and though commonly ſuch agues are not dangerous in the ſpring, this brought him to his grave. He died at Theobalds, the 27th of March, in the 59th year of his age, after a reign of twenty-two years in England.

His death happening, as I may ſay, ſuddenly and unexpectedly, cauſed many ſuſpicions, which fell on the duke of Buckingham. When one of the king's fits was going off, the duke cauſed certain plaſters to be applied to his ſide and wriſts, and gave him twice, with his own hands, a medicine to drink, in the abſence of the phyſicians.

phyſicians. Nay, he would have given it a third time, but could not perſuade him to take it. The king finding himſelf much worſe, ſent for the phyſicians, who ſaid poſitively they would not preſcribe, if the plaſters were not immediately removed. However, the king died within a few days. The duke was afterwards impeached by the commons, not directly for poiſoning the king, but for daring to apply remedies without the advice of his phyſicians.

CHARLES

CHARLES I.

Anno 1625. IT is no eaſy thing to give a juſt character of Charles the Firſt, amidſt the exceſſive commendations beſtowed on him by ſome, and the calumnies wherewith others have endeavoured to blacken his reputation. If the parties born in his reign had died with him, we might find in the hiſtories of that time, compoſed after the troubles were over, an impartiality which might help to form a true judgment of this prince's character. But the ſame parties continuing in the following reigns with a mutual animoſity, it may be ſaid there is not an Engliſh impartial hiſtorian upon this ſubject.

Some had no other view than to vindicate the king; and others, whoſe aim was to juſtify the parliament, could not do it without loading the king, and rendering him

him odious. We muſt therefore proceed with the utmoſt caution, when we are in ſearch of this prince's character, for fear of being miſled, and drawn into error by the different repreſentations given their readers by the hiſtorians. Notwithſtanding theſe difficulties, I ſhall briefly ſpeak my thoughts, free from all party-paſſion and prejudice.

I do not find the commendations beſtowed on Charles the Firſt, with regard to his ſobriety, temperance, and chaſtity, were ever conteſted. All agree likewiſe that he was a good huſband, a good father, and a good maſter. But ſome accuſe him, and perhaps not unjuſtly, of ſuffering his queen to have too great an influence over him, and too large a ſhare in ſtate affairs. The kingdom being Proteſtant, and the queen a very zealous Catholic, her power, which ſhe greatly abuſed, in cauſing the moſt important offices to be conferred on Papiſts, muſt have been

been looked upon with a jealous eye. This was the chief ground of the opinion ſpread about the kingdom, that the court intended to reſtore the Catholic religion in England.

He was ſo great a lover of juſtice, that no temptation could diſpoſe him to a wrongful action, except it was ſo diſguiſed to him that he believed it to be juſt. Theſe are the lord Clarendon's own words, which may be very true, if applied to the concerns of particular perſons. But, beſides the juſtice which a king ought to adminiſter impartially to private perſons, there is another kind of juſtice due from him to all his people in general. With reſpect to this laſt, it may juſtly be doubted, that the lord Clarendon's encomium is inconſiſtent with the project of altering the conſtitution, and aſſuming a power which certainly was illegal. Nay, I do not believe that this was one of the things diſguiſed to him, and I ſhould rather think

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it was by him that his miniſters and courtiers framed their conduct, and adapted their notions to his, in order to make their court, and advance their fortune.

Never was king perhaps ſo punctual and regular in his devotions, both public and private. This was of ſome uſe to him, to repel the charge of his not being well affected to the Proteſtant religion, and he knew how to improve it on occaſion.

He abhorred all debauchery, and could not endure an obſcene or prophane word. His court was very different from his father's, where oaths, prophane jeſts, and obſcene diſcourſe, were but too much in vogue. It is hard to conceive how the duke of Buckingham, who was uſed to king James's ways, could accommodate himſelf to the gravity and ſeverity of Charles the Firſt, or how king Charles could adapt himſelf to the duke of Buckingham's manners.

James

James the Firſt was laviſh, and his ſon Charles inclined towards avarice. But this failing may be excuſed by the conſideration, that he never abounded with money from the beginning to the end of his reign.

His enemies would repreſent him as a cruel and bloody prince; but as they have not been able to reproach him with any particular action denoting ſuch a diſpoſition, it is eaſy to perceive this charge is founded on the ſuppoſition of his having been author of a war wherein ſo much blood was ſpilt.

Sincerity was not his favourite virtue. He made frequent uſe of mental reſervations, concealed in ambiguous terms and general expreſſions, of which he reſerved the explanation at a proper time and place. For this reaſon the parliament could never confide in his promiſes, wherein there was always either ſome ambiguous term, or ſome reſtriction that rendered them uſeleſs.

uſeleſs. This may be ſaid to be one of the principal cauſes of his ruin, becauſe, giving thereby occaſion of diſtruſt, it was not poſſible to find any expedient for a peace with the parliament. He was thought to act with ſo little ſincerity in his engagements, that it was believed there was no dependence on his word. The parliament could not even reſolve to debate on the king's propoſitions, ſo convinced were they of his ability to hide his real intentions under ambiguous expreſſions. But they ſent their own propoſitions to the king, with the liberty only of ſaying, content, or not content; ſo apprehenſive were they of his explications. But as I may be accuſed of loading the king too much upon the point of ſincerity, I think it incumbent on me to juſtify what I have ſaid, by an unexceptionable evidence; I mean the earl of Clarendon.

" A law

"A law enacted by violence and force "(ſays that illuſtrious hiſtorian) is not "rightfully enacted, was one of thoſe po- "ſitions of Ariſtotle which hath never "been ſince contradicted, and was an "advantage that, being well managed, and "ſtoutly inſiſted upon, would, in ſpite of "all their machinations, have brought his "Majeſty's enemies to a temper of being "treated with. But I have ſome cauſe to "believe, that even this argument, which "was unanſwerable, for the rejecting the "bill (for taking away the biſhops' votes), "was applied for the confirming it; and "an opinion that the violence and force, "uſed in procuring it, rendered it abſo- "lutely invalid and void, made the con- "firmation of it leſs conſidered, as not "being of ſtrength to make that act good, "which was in itſelf null; and I doubt this "logic had an influence upon other acts of "no leſs moment than theſe."

Let the reader judge, after this, if we may boaſt of king Charles's ſincerity, ſince even in paſſing acts of parliament, which is the moſt authentic and ſolemn promiſe a king of England can make, he gave his aſſent merely in an opinion that they were void in themſelves, and conſequently he was not bound by this engagement. I paſs over in ſilence the manifeſt breach of the Petition of Right, perhaps upon the ſame principle; and of his many aſſurances to his parliament, of his intention to maintain their privileges, which he violated within a few days; which may be ſeen at large in the hiſtory of his reign.

Some accuſe him of an inclination for the Roman catholic religion, nay, there are who carry this charge ſo far as to ſay, he intended to reſtore it in England. Theſe imputations are groundleſs: but it cannot be denied, he gave occaſion for them by his conduct, though contrary to his intention. During the firſt fifteen years of his

his reign, the Roman catholics were not only ſcreened from the rigour of the law, but even encouraged and countenanced to ſuch a degree, that he made them privy-counſellors, ſecretaries of ſtate, and lords lieutenants of counties. Two things reduced him to this condeſcenſion: the firſt, the queen's importunities, who was extremely zealous for her religion: the ſecond, his project to render himſelf abſolute, for the execution of which he believed the aſſiſtance of the catholics, as well Engliſh as foreigners, to be neceſſary. But I will not affirm that the queen, and ſome of the miniſtry, had not formed, with regard to religion, more extenſive projects, which they did not think proper to impart to the king. The aſſiſtance of the catholics, whom the king had managed for another occaſion, became neceſſary for his own defence, after his breach with the parliament. How unwilling ſoever he ſeemed to receive any aid from the papiſts, it

is certain, many were entertained in his ſervice, and that he was privately aſſiſted by the catholics on ſundry important occaſions.

Though it cannot be proved that he excited the Iriſh rebellion, it may however be affirmed, it was not againſt him that the Iriſh took arms, ſince they never had leſs cauſe to complain, than in this and the late reign. Beſides, the papiſts, both Iriſh and Engliſh, always looked upon this prince as their protector, and were ever ready to aſſiſt him. Had he ſucceeded in his deſigns, very likely the condition of the catholics in England and Ireland would have been much more happy, and the penal laws in great meaſure repealed: but it does not follow that the king himſelf had any inclination to popery, or intended to eſtabliſh the Romiſh religion. In ſhort, that he was a ſincere member of the church of England can hardly be doubted, ſince he affirmed it on the ſcaffold, at a time when

when it could be of no ſervice to him to diſſemble his belief.

Many people give him the ſurname of Martyr, pretending he ſuffered death in maintenance of the truth of the Proteſtant religion, againſt the Preſbyterians and Independents, and call the day of his death, which is ſolemnized yearly on the 30th of January, the day of his martyrdom. But, in the firſt place, there was too great a complication of cauſes, which brought him to this tragical end, to aſcribe his death ſolely to religion. Though it were true that religion was the ſole cauſe of his death, it would not be univerſally agreed that he died for defending the truth of the Proteſtant religion, ſince among Proteſtants the Engliſh alone, or rather a great part of the Engliſh, hold Epiſcopacy to be a doctrine of faith. Though dying for epiſcopacy were really martyrdom, the king, in his laſt propoſals at Newport, agreed to reduce epiſcopacy to a very ſmall mat-

ter. Had he been condemned by the Preſbyterians, he might in ſome manner be ſaid to have ſuffered for epiſcopacy; but it is evident, the Preſbyterians had no ſhare in this ſentence, nor ever thought of bringing him to a trial. The Independents were the men that condemned and executed him; and ſurely it was not on any religious account, but to turn the monarchy into a republic. If the evidence of Richard Price, a ſcrivener, as related in the hiſtory, be true, king Charles cannot be ſaid to have ſuffered death for ſupporting religion againſt the Independents, ſince, according to his depoſition, he offered to grant them all the freedom they ſhould deſire, if they would but take his part. However this be, the church of England, having recovered in the reign of Charles the Second the advantage ſhe had loſt in that of Charles the Firſt, appointed the day of his death to be kept every year with faſting and humiliation; which has cauſed

ſome

ſome to give him the name of Martyr, how ſmall ſoever his pretenſions were to that title.

To conclude: Charles the Firſt was endued with many virtues and noble qualities. There is even room to believe that his failings flowed entirely from his deſign to enſlave England; and if on ſome occaſions he followed not exactly the rules of ſincerity, it was only the more eaſily to execute what he had undertaken. Without this unfortunate project, he might be reckoned one of the moſt accompliſhed princes that had ever been on the Engliſh throne. The duke of Buckingham, the earl of Strafford, archbiſhop Laud, and the queen herſelf (uſed to a very different government from that of England), were the perſons that ruined this unhappy prince, whom they ſo paſſionately deſired to raiſe higher than his predeceſſors. But who can forbear making a very natural reflection on this ſubject; I mean, upon

the punishment of those evil counsellors, and of the king himself? The duke of Buckingham lost his life by the hands of an assassin; Laud, Strafford, and the king himself, died on the scaffold; and the queen spent the residue of her days in a melancholy widowhood, being even slighted by her nearest relations; she lived, however, long enough to see the prince her son's restoration, but found not with him all the satisfaction she expected, which doubtless was the cause of her return to France, where she died in the year 1669.

The king, on the day of his trial, refusing to answer before the high court of justice, his refusal was taken, according to the laws of England, for a confession; and sentence of death was passed upon him, the 27th of January. A little before his sentence was pronounced, he earnestly desired to be heard before the two houses, saying he had something of great importance to offer them; but his desire was rejected.

jected. It is generally believed, he intended to propoſe to the parliament, that he would abdicate the crown in favour of his eldeſt ſon.

The ſentence was executed the 30th of January, 1648-9, on a ſcaffold erected in the ſtreet at the windows of the Banqueting-houſe at Whitehall. The king ſuffered death with great conſtancy, and without ſhewing the leaſt ſigns of weakneſs or amazement. His body, after having been for ſome days expoſed to view in one of the rooms at Whitehall, was carried to Windſor, and buried, without any pomp, in St. George's chapel.

Another hiſtorian, of no little credit, has given the following character of Charles the Firſt: he has drawn him with greater aſperity and freedom of expreſſion than perhaps was neceſſary, though not leſs juſt.

"His repeated and continual violation of his coronation oath, his paſſing the Bill

of Rights, and owning all theſe rights to be legal and juſt, and thence confeſſing that he had broken them all; nay, his violating that very bill in all its parts, almoſt as ſoon as he had paſſed it; were but ill marks of a heart very upright and ſincere. Of all theſe exceſſes he was guilty, at a time when his parliament were well diſpoſed for the honourable ſupport of his government, and free from any deſign to diſtreſs it, much leſs to alter it; nay, were ready to grant him very noble ſupplies, if he would but have ſuffered juſtice to be done upon public traitors, the infamous inſtruments of illegal power, and of mutual diſtruſt between him and his people.

"He actually committed, or attempted to commit, all the enormities, all the acts of uſurpation, committed by the late king James; levied money againſt law, levied forces, and obliged his ſubjects to maintain them againſt law; raiſed a body of foreign forces to deſtroy the law and enſlave

ſlave his people at once; diſpenſed with all the laws; filled the priſons with illuſtrious patriots who defended the law, and themſelves by the law; encouraged and rewarded hireling doctors, to maintain that his will was above law, nay, itſelf the higheſt law, and binding upon the conſciences of his ſubjects, on pain of eternal damnation; and that ſuch as reſiſted his royal will, reſiſted God, and were guilty of impiety and rebellion. He robbed cities of their charters, the public of its money and liberty, and treated his free-born ſubjects as ſlaves born only to obey him.

"It is ſaid by ſome hiſtorians, that he was not a papiſt. Perhaps he was not, that is, not a ſubject to the pope of Rome; but he was bent upon ſetting up an hierarchy in England, reſembling that of Rome in all its power and terrors. Nor does it avail, if men are to be perſecuted and oppreſſed for their conſcience, whether they ſuffer from the tyranny of a Hildebrand, a Lu-

ther, or a Laud; it is certain, that of all the diſſenters, none but papiſts had any mercy ſhewn them, and theſe were high in favour.

"As to what has been further offered, in proof of the king's ſincerity and good intentions, namely, his Chriſtian fortitude at his death; this reaſon will equally juſtify thoſe who doomed him to die. Did not the regicides meet death with great intrepidity, ſome of them with raptures? Do not almoſt all enthuſiaſts die ſo, even the moſt cruel and bloody, even traitors and aſſaſſins? I think, the goodneſs of his intention had been more clear, had he fairly owned the many grievous iniquities of his reign, his oppreſſion and arbitrary rule."

There need be nothing added to this extract, which ſome perhaps may think abundantly too ſevere. But if ſuch things are true, why ſhould they not be ſpoken? Is the name of king Charles ſo very ſacred, that

that every name elſe muſt be aſperſed to preſerve it ſpotleſs? Admit but a very ſmall part of what is here ſaid, and aſcribe all the reſt to partiality and malice; and I doubt there will be ſtill enough to deprive the royal martyr of much of the veneration that is paid to his memory.

CHARLES

CHARLES II.

Anno 1660. HE was the greateſt inſtance in hiſtory (ſays that learned prelate biſhop Burnet, in the Hiſtory of his own Times) of the various revolutions of which any one man ſeemed capable. He was bred up, the firſt twelve years of his life, with the ſplendor that became the heir of ſo great a crown. After he had paſſed through eighteen years in great inequalities, unhappy in the war, in the loſs of his father, and of the crown of England; Scotland did not only receive him, though upon terms hard of digeſtion, but made an attempt upon England for him, though a feeble one. He loſt the battle of Worceſter with too much indifference; and then he ſhewed more care of his perſon than became one who had ſo much at ſtake. He wandered about England for ten weeks after that, hiding from place to place;

place; but, under all the apprehenſions he had then upon him, he ſhewed a temper ſo careleſs, and ſo much turned to levity, that he was then diverting himſelf with little houſehold ſports, in as unconcerned a manner as if he had ſuſtained no loſs, and had been in no danger at all. He got at laſt out of England: but he had been obliged to ſo many who had been faithful to him, and careful of him, that he ſeemed afterwards to reſolve to make an equal return to them all; and finding it not eaſy to reward them all as they deſerved, he forgot them all alike. Moſt princes ſeem to have this pretty deep in them; and to think that they ought never to remember paſt ſervices, but that their acceptance of them is a full reward. He, of all in our age, exerted this piece of prerogative in the ampleſt manner; for he never ſeemed to charge his memory, or to trouble his thoughts, with the ſenſe of any of the ſervices that had been done him. While he

was abroad at Paris or Bruſſels, he never ſeemed to lay any thing to heart. He purſued all his diverſions and irregular pleaſures in a free career; and appeared as ſerene under the loſs of a crown, as the greateſt philoſopher could have been. Nor did he willingly hearken to any of thoſe projects, with which he often complained that his chancellor perſecuted him: that in which he ſeemed moſt concerned, was, to find money for ſupporting his expences; and it was often ſaid, that if Cromwell would have compounded the matter, and have given him a good round penſion, that he might have been induced to reſign his title to him. During his exile, he delivered himſelf ſo entirely up to his pleaſures, that he became incapable of application. He ſpent little of his time in reading or ſtudy, and yet leſs in thinking; and in the ſtate his affairs were then in, he accuſtomed himſelf to ſay to every perſon, and upon all occaſions, that which he thought

thought would pleaſe moſt, ſo that words or promiſes went very eaſily from him; and he had ſo ill an opinion of mankind, that he thought the great art of living and governing was, to manage all things and all perſons with a depth of craft and diſſimulation, and in that few men in the world could put on the appearances of ſincerity better than he could; under which ſo much artifice was uſually hid, that in concluſion he could deceive none, for all were become miſtruſtful of him. He had great vices, but ſcarce any virtues to correct them. He had in him ſome vices that were leſs hurtful, which corrected his more hurtful ones. He was, during the active part of life, given up to ſloth and lewdneſs to ſuch a degree, that he hated buſineſs, and could not bear to engage in any thing that gave him much trouble, or put him under any conſtraint; and though he deſired to become abſolute, and to overturn both our religion

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and our laws, yet he would neither run the riſk, nor give himſelf the trouble, which ſo great a deſign required. He had an appearance of gentleneſs in his outward deportment, but he ſeemed to have no bowels nor tenderneſs in his nature, and in the end of his life he became cruel. He was apt to forgive all crimes, even blood itſelf; yet he never forgave any thing that was done againſt himſelf, after his firſt and general act of indemnity, which was to be reckoned as done rather upon maxims of ſtate, than inclination to mercy. He delivered himſelf up to a moſt enormous courſe of vice, without any ſort of reſtraint, even from the conſideration of the neareſt relations; the moſt ſtudied extravagancies that way, ſeemed to the very laſt to be much delighted in, and purſued by him. He had the art of making all people grow fond of him at firſt, by a ſoftneſs in his whole way of converſation, as he was certainly the beſt bred man of the age: but

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when it appeared how little could be built on his promiſe, they were cured of the fondneſs that he was apt to raiſe in them. When he ſaw young men of quality, who had ſomething more than ordinary in them, he drew them about him, and ſet himſelf to corrupt them both in religion and morality; in which he proved ſo unhappily ſucceſsful, that he left England much changed, at his death, from what he had found it at his reſtoration. He loved to talk over all the ſtories of his life, to every new man that came about him. His ſtay in Scotland, and the ſhare he had in the war of Paris, in carrying meſſages from the one ſide to the other, were his common topics. He went over theſe in a very graceful manner; but ſo often and copiouſly, that all thoſe who had been long accuſtomed to them, grew weary of them; and when he entered on thoſe ſtories, they uſually withdrew, ſo that he often began them in a full audience, and, before he had

had done, there were not above four or five left about him; which drew a ſevere jeſt from the earl of Rocheſter, who ſaid, "He wondered to ſee a man have ſo good "a memory, as to repeat the ſame ſtory "without loſing the leaſt circumſtance; "and yet not remember that he had told "it to the ſame perſons the very day be-"fore." This made him fond of ſtrangers; for they hearkened to all his often repeated ſtories, and went away as in a rapture at ſuch an uncommon condeſcenſion in a king.

His perſon and temper, his vices, as well as his fortune, reſemble the character that we have given us of Tiberius, inſo-much that it were eaſy to draw a parallel between them. Tiberius's baniſhment, and his coming afterwards to reign, makes the compariſon in that reſpect come pretty near. His hating of buſineſs, and his love of pleaſures; his raiſing of favourites and truſting them entirely, and hi s pulling them

them down and hating them exceſſively; his art of covering deep deſigns, particularly of revenge, with an appearance of ſoftneſs; bring them ſo near a likeneſs, that I did not much wonder to obſerve the reſemblance of their face and perſons.

Few things ever went near his heart; the duke of Glouceſter's death ſeemed to touch him much; but thoſe who knew him beſt, thought it was becauſe he had loſt him by whom only he could have balanced the ſurviving brother whom he hated, and yet embroiled all his affairs to preſerve the ſucceſſion to him.

His ill conduct in the firſt Dutch war, and thoſe terrible calamities of the plague and fire of London, with that loſs and reproach which he ſuffered by the inſult at Chatham, made all people conclude there was a curſe upon his government. His throwing the public hatred at that time upon lord Clarendon, was both unjuſt

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and ungrateful. And when his people had brought him out of all his difficulties, upon his entering into the Triple Alliance, his selling that to France, and his entering on the second Dutch war with as little colour as he had for the first; his beginning it with the attempt on the Dutch Smyrna fleet; the shutting up the Exchequer; and his declaration for toleration, which was a step for the introduction of popery; make such a chain of black actions, flowing from blacker designs, that it amazed those, who had known all this, to see with what impudent strains of flattery addresses were penned during his life, and yet more grosly after his death. His contributing so much to the raising the greatness of France, chiefly at sea, was such an error, that it could not flow from want of thought or true sense. He desired that all the methods the French took, in the increase and conduct of their naval force, might be sent him, and he seemed

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to ſtudy them with concern and zeal; he ſhewed what errors they committed, and how they ought to be corrected, as if he had been a viceroy to France, rather than a king, that ought to have watched over, and prevented the progreſs they made, as the greateſt of all miſchiefs that could happen to him or to his people. They that judged the moſt favourably of this, thought it was done out of revenge to the Dutch, that, with the aſſiſtance of ſo great a fleet as France could join to his own, he might be able to deſtroy them; but others put a worſe conſtruction on it, and thought, that ſeeing he could not quite maſter or deceive his ſubjects by his own ſtrength and management, he was willing to help forward the greatneſs of the French at ſea, that by their aſſiſtance he might more certainly ſubdue his own people: according to what was generally believed to have fallen from lord Clifford, That if the king muſt be in a dependence, it was better to

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pay it to a great and generous king, than to five hundred of his own inſolent ſubjects. No part of his character looked wickeder, as well as meaner, than that he, all the while he was profeſſing to be of the church of England, expreſſing both zeal and affection to it, was yet ſecretly reconciled to the church of Rome: thus mocking God, and deceiving the world with ſo groſs a prevarication. And his not having the honeſty or courage to own it to the laſt; his not ſhewing any ſign of the leaſt remorſe for his ill-led life, or any tenderneſs either for his ſubjects in general, or for the queen and his ſervants; and his recommending only his miſtreſſes and their children to his brother's care; would have been a ſtrange concluſion to any other life, but was well enough ſuited to all the other parts of his.

The two papers found in his ſtrong box, concerning religion, and afterwards publiſhed by his brother, looked like ſtudy

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and reaſoning. Tenniſon told me (ſays biſhop Burnet) he ſaw the original in Pepys's hand, to whom king James truſted them for ſome time. They were interlined in ſeveral places. And the interlinings ſeemed to be writ in a hand different from that in which the papers were writ. But he was not ſo well acquainted with the king's hand, as to make any judgment in the matter, whether they were writ by him or not. All that knew him when they read them, did, without any ſort of doubting, conclude, that he never compoſed them: for he never read the ſcriptures, nor laid things together, further than to turn them to a jeſt, or for ſome lively expreſſion. Theſe papers were probably writ either by lord Briſtol or by lord Aubigny, who knew the ſecret of his religion, and gave him thoſe papers, as abſtracts of ſome diſcourſes they had with him on thoſe heads, to keep him fixed to them. And it is very pro-

bable, that they, apprehending their danger, if any ſuch papers had been found about him writ in their hand, might prevail with him to copy them out himſelf, though his lazineſs that way made it certainly no eaſy thing, to bring him to give himſelf ſo much trouble. He had talked over a great part of them to myſelf (ſays Burnet); ſo that as ſoon as I ſaw them, I remembered his expreſſions, and perceived that he had made himſelf maſter of the argument, as far as thoſe papers could carry him. But the publiſhing them, ſhewed a want of judgment, or of regard to his memory, in thoſe who did it: for the greateſt kindneſs that could be ſhewn to his memory, would have been, to let both his papers and himſelf be forgotten.

After ſeeing in this character all that can be ſaid to the diſadvantage of Charles the Second, I ſhall preſent the reader with the picture of the ſame prince,

drawn ſomewhat different by the noble Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave, who was no enemy to the king or his family.

As to the king's religion, ſays Mulgrave, it was more deiſm than popery; which he owed more to the livelineſs of his parts, and careleſſneſs of his temper, than either to reading or much conſideration; for his quickneſs of apprehenſion at firſt view could diſcern through the ſeveral cheats of pious pretences; and his natural lazineſs confirmed him in an equal miſtruſt of them all, for fear he ſhould be troubled with examining which religion was beſt. If in his early travels, and late adminiſtration, he ſeemed a little biaſſed to one ſort of religion, the firſt is only to be imputed to a certain eaſineſs of temper, and a complaiſance for that company he then was forced to keep, and the laſt was no more than his being tired (which he ſoon was in any difficulty) with thoſe bold oppoſitions in parliament, which made

him almoſt throw himſelf into the arms of a Roman Catholic party, ſo remarkable in England for their loyalty, who embraced him gladly, and lulled him aſleep with thoſe ſongs of abſolute ſovereignty, which the beſt and wiſeſt of princes are often unable to reſiſt. And though he engaged himſelf on that ſide more fully, at a time when it is in vain, and too late to diſſemble, we ought leſs to wonder at it, than to conſider that our very judgments are apt to grow in time as partial as our affections: and thus, by accident only, he became of their opinion, in his weakneſs, who had ſo much endeavoured always to contribute to his power. He loved eaſe and quiet; to which his unneceſſary wars are ſo far from being a contradiction, that they are rather a proof of it, ſince they were made chiefly to comply with thoſe perſons whoſe diſſatisfaction would have proved more uneaſy to one of his humour, than all that diſtant noiſe of cannon, which

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he would often liſten to with a great deal of tranquillity. Beſides, the great and almoſt only pleaſure of mind he appeared addicted to, was ſhipping and ſea-affairs; which ſeemed to be ſo much his talent, both for knowledge, as well as inclination, that a war of that kind was rather an entertainment, than any diſturbance to his thoughts. If he did not go himſelf at the head of ſo magnificent a fleet, it is only to be imputed to that eagerneſs for military glory in his brother; who, under the ſhew of a decent care for preſerving the royal perſon from danger, engroſſed all that ſort of honour to himſelf, with as much jealouſy of any other's interpoſing in it, as a king of another temper would have had of his, though without reaſon.—It is certain no prince was ever more fitted by nature for his country's intereſt, than he was in all his maritime inclinations; which might have proved of ſufficient advantage to this nation, if he had

been as careful in depreſſing all ſuch improvements in France, as of advancing and encouraging our own: but it ſeems he wanted jealouſy in all his inclinations, which leads us to conſider him in his pleaſures; where he was rather abandoned than luxurious; and, like our female libertines, apter to be debauched for the ſatisfaction of others, than to ſeek with choice where moſt to pleaſe himſelf. I am of opinion alſo (ſays the noble earl) that in his latter time, there was as much of lazineſs as of love in all thoſe hours he paſſed among his miſtreſſes; who, after all, ſerved only to fill up his ſeraglio, while a bewitching kind of pleaſure called *ſauntering*, and talking, without any conſtraint, was the true ſultana queen he delighted in.

He was ſurely inclined to juſtice; for nothing elſe would have retained him ſo faſt to the ſucceſſion of a brother, againſt a ſon he was ſo fond of, and the humour of a party, which he ſo much feared. I

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am willing alſo to impute to his juſtice, whatever ſeems in ſome meaſure to contradict the general opinion of his clemency; as his ſuffering always the rigour of the law to proceed, not only againſt all highwaymen, but alſo ſeveral others, in whoſe caſes the lawyers (according to their wonted cuſtom) had uſed ſometimes a great deal of hardſhip and ſeverity. His underſtanding was quick and lively in little things, and ſometimes would ſoar high enough to great ones, but unable to keep it up with any long attention or application. Witty in all ſorts of converſation; and telling a ſtory ſo well, that, not out of flattery, but from the pleaſure of hearing it, we uſed to ſeem ignorant of what he had repeated to us ten times before, as a good comedy will bear being ſeen often: of a wonderful mixture; loſing all his time, and, till of late, ſetting his whole heart on the fair-ſex; yet, neither angry with rivals, nor in the leaſt

nice as to their being beloved; and while he ſacrificed all things to his miſtreſſes, he would uſe to grudge and be uneaſy at their loſing a little of it at play, though never ſo neceſſary for their diverſion: nor would he venture five pounds at tennis to thoſe ſervants, who might obtain as many thouſands, either before he came thither, or as ſoon as he left off. Not falſe to his word, but full of diſſimulation, and very adroit at it, yet no man eaſier to be impoſed on; for his great dexterity was in cozening himſelf, by gaining a little one way, while it coſt him ten times as much another, and by careſſing thoſe perſons moſt, who had deluded him the oftener; and yet the quickeſt in the world at ſpying ſuch a ridicule in another. Familiar, eaſy, and good-natured; but for great offences, ſevere and inflexible: alſo in one week's abſence, quite forgetting thoſe ſervants, to whoſe faces he could hardly deny any thing. In the midſt of all his remiſſneſs,

miſſneſs, ſo induſtrious and indefatigable on ſome particular occaſions, that no man would either toil longer, or be able to manage it better.

He was ſo liberal as to ruin his affairs by it; for want in a king of England, turns things juſt upſide down, and expoſes a prince to his people's mercy. It did yet worſe in him, for it forced him alſo to depend on his great neighbour of France; who played the brother with him ſufficiently in all thoſe times of extremity. Yet this profuſeneſs of his did not ſo much proceed from the over-valuing thoſe he favoured, as from his under-valuing any ſums of money which he did not ſee: though he found his error in this, but I confeſs a little of the lateſt. He had ſo natural an averſion to all formality, that with as much wit, as moſt kings ever had, and with as majeſtic a mien, yet he could not on premeditation, either at parliament or at council, either in words or geſture,

act the part of a king for a moment, which carried him into the other extreme, more inconvenient of the two, of letting all diſtinction and ceremony fall to the ground, as uſeleſs and foppiſh. His temper both of body and mind was admirable, which made him an eaſy, generous lover, a civil, obliging huſband, a friendly brother, an indulgent father, and a good-natured maſter. If he had been as ſolicitous about improving the faculties of his mind, as he was in the management of his bodily health: although, alas! the one proved unable to make his life long, the other had not failed to have made it famous. He was an illuſtrious exception to all the common rules of phyſiognomy: for with a moſt ſaturnine, harſh ſort of countenance, he was both of a merry and merciful diſpoſition; and in the laſt 30 years of his life, as fortunate as thoſe of his father had been diſmal and tumultuous.

If his death has been by ſome ſuſpected of being untimely, it may be partly imputed

puted to his extreme healthy conſtitution, which made the world as much ſurpriſed at his dying before threeſcore, as if nothing but an ill accident could have killed him. I would not ſay any thing on ſo ſad a ſubject, if I did not think ſilence itſelf would in ſuch a caſe ſignify too much, and therefore as an impartial writer, I am obliged to obſerve, that the moſt knowing and moſt diſcerning of his phyſicians, doctor Short, did not only believe him poiſoned, but thought himſelf ſo too, not long after, for having declared his opinion a little too boldly. But here I muſt needs take notice of an unuſual piece of juſtice, which yet all the world has almoſt unanimouſly agreed in: I mean in not ſuſpecting his ſucceſſor of the leaſt connivance in ſo horrid a villany; and perhaps there never was a more remarkable inſtance of the wonderful power of truth and innocence; for it is next to a miracle that ſo unfortunate a prince, in the midſt of all thoſe diſadvan-

tages he lies under, ſhould be yet cleared of this, even by his greateſt enemies: notwithſtanding all thoſe circumſtances, that uſed to give a ſuſpicion, and that extreme malice which has of late attended him in all his other actions.

The nature of the king's illneſs, and the circumſtances of his death, are treated more at large by that able hiſtorian Burnet, in the Hiſtory of his own Times, but what I have ſaid is, I think, ſufficient.

After giving theſe different characters of king Charles the Second, drawn by ſuch able hands, I think (ſays that candid hiſtorian Rapin) myſelf obliged to make a ſort of parallel, in order to aſſiſt the reader in the diſcovery of the truth. Dr. Burnet was a Scotchman, he had been educated among the epiſcopalians, but, however, was always accuſed of having a tincture of preſbyterianiſm, the religion of his country, when free to purſue its inclination. He is likewiſe accuſed of having been entirely

entirely in the whig-party. In ſhort, he had no reaſon to be pleaſed with either Charles the Second, or James the Second, and therefore we muſt read with caution whatever he ſays not reconcileable with the known actions of Charles the Second, or expreſsly contradicted by others.

Burnet ſays, Charles was incapable of any application. The earl ſays the ſame. The biſhop ſays the king was for rendering himſelf abſolute. If the earl ſays it not in expreſs terms, he ſufficiently intimates it by ſaying, that the Roman Catholic party lulled him aſleep with the enchanting ſongs of ſovereignty and prerogative. Burnet ſays the king was apt to forgive all crimes, but never forgave any thing that was done againſt himſelf. The earl praiſes his clemency, and ſays, he was eaſy and good-natured in trifles, but in great offences ſevere and inflexible. This may be the biſhop's meaning, expreſſed in other words.

In short, let these two pictures be compared with all possible exactness, and they will both be found very like; but that the two painters had different views, and pursued different methods.

King Charles left no issue by his queen, Donna Catherina, daughter of John the Fifth, king of Portugal, but by his several mistresses a numerous one.

JAMES

JAMES II

Anno 1685. THIS prince was of an active, violent, and vindictive temper. Obſtinacy and bigotry were the ruling motives of his actions; nay, ſuch a thorough bigot to popery was James, that he would ſtick at nothing to have it eſtabliſhed: to which end he laboured to extend the regal prerogative, and to eſtabliſh a deſpotic government. Some good qualities, it muſt be acknowledged, he poſſeſſed; being remarkable for his frugality of public money, his induſtry, his application to naval affairs, and his encouragement of trade; but we cannot ſay much in praiſe of, or join in ſentiment with thoſe who have extolled his ſincerity; for his whole reign was a continued violation of his reiterated promiſes of preſerving inviolate the liberties and

religion

religion of his people. Theſe, in his lofty idea of regal authority, had no right to liberty, but what might be dependent on his ſovereign will and pleaſure. Upon this fallacious prejudice he acted in defiance of the fundamental laws and conſtitution of the realm; burſt in ſunder all thoſe ties which unite ſubjects to their ſovereign. He confined all power, encouragement, and favour, to the Catholics; and ſacrificed every conſideration of juſtice and prudence to a falſe zeal. This hurried him into meaſures which rendered his government intolerable to a free and generous people; and made it neceſſary for them not to ſubmit any longer to the yoke of an arbitrary tyrant, guided ſolely by the violent counſels of a popiſh jeſuitical faction, and blindly adopting their ſlaviſh ſuperſtition. He alſo proſecuted his deſign with ſuch vehemence, as excited the fears of his free-born ſubjects, and made them unite in

defence

defence of every thing moſt dear and valuable: the reſult was, to them a glorious revolution; to him diſgrace and a juſt depoſition. We ſay a juſt and legal depoſition. If indeed the people were created only for the advantage and the pleaſure of kings; if they have a divine right to be tyrants, and ſubjects are appointed by Heaven to be ſlaves; James had reaſon to complain; and we may add, his people had reaſon to rejoice, that a favourable opportunity occurred for ſtripping him of the power of rendering millions unhappy at his pleaſure. But on the other hand, if people have a right to the poſſeſſion of their own property, till they part with it by their own conſent, or by that of their repreſentatives; if they have a right to the bleſſings of civil and religious liberty, and kings were only appointed for the purpoſe of defending them; the people of England had a right from nature, from reaſon, and the calls of duty,

to

to expel a weak, obſtinate prince, who made it his buſineſs to deſtroy what he was bound to defend. By ſuch conduct he was rendered wholly incapable of diſcharging the important truſt of government; and hence a free people may learn, how dangerous it is to allow any prince infected with the Romiſh ſuperſtition to fill the throne of theſe kingdoms.

During the deſpotic reign of this weak, miſguided prince, the people were ruled with a rod of iron; but happily for the people of England, while king William the Third was on his journey to London, king James, on the 12th of December, 1688, diſappeared in the night-time, accompanied by Sir Edward Hales, a new convert, and haſtened to a ſhip, which waited for him at the mouth of the river. The king's diſappearance was productive of conſternation and confuſion, as all government ſeemed to be ſuſpended, till the happy arrival of the prince of Orange,

who put an end at once to their fears and perſecutions. His abdicating the throne as he did, was a fortunate circumſtance in many reſpects.

AN

IMPARTIAL CHARACTER

OF

MARY II. Queen of ENGLAND,

Wife of King WILLIAM III.

Anno 1689. THIS amiable queen in her perſon was tall and well-proportioned, with an oval viſage, lively eyes, agreeable features, a mild aſpect, and a natural majeſtic mien that commanded reſpect, adorned with an affable diſpoſition. Her apprehenſion was clear, her memory retentive, her judgment ſolid; equally formed to bear adverſity and proſperity; and with the courage of the other ſex, ſhe poſſeſſed all the ſoftneſs of her own. Her excellent goodneſs in a uniform tenor of life, and her beneficent actions, illuſtri-

ouſly

ouſly viſible, afford a more effectual amplification of her worth and praiſe, than the moſt lively and graceful colours of language can impart: ſhe was a zealous Proteſtant, and her heart was ſo firmly attached to the paths of pure religion, that ſhe was neither ſeduced nor terrified from it, in a court deeply affected with ſuperſtition, and ever watchful to propagate it. The diſpoſal of her in marriage to a prince of the Proteſtant religion appears an act of divine Providence, to bring about the miraculous deliverance of this nation from popery, and its conſtant attendant ſlavery. In the public worſhip of God, and a regular and daily exerciſe of private devotion, this queen was a bright example of unaffected piety. When her reſidence was at the Hague, a lady of quality coming to the court to pay her a viſit on a Saturday in the afternoon, ſhe was told the princeſs was retired from all company, and kept a faſt in preparation for

for receiving the ſacrament the next day. The lady ſtaying till five o'clock, the princeſs came out, and contented herſelf with a ſlender ſupper, it being incongruous to conclude a faſt with a feaſt. But her religion was not confined to either the chapel or the cloſet; it was influential on her practice. She was not fettered with ſuperſtitious ſcruples, but her clear judgment and free ſpirit were for union of Chriſtians in things eſſential to chriſtianity. Her boſom was like the pacific ſea, that ſeldom ſuffers or is diſturbed by a ſtorm. She was ſo exempt from the tyranny of the angry paſſions, that we may have ſome conjecture of the felicity of the ſtate of unſtained innocence, of which one ray was ſo powerful. She was ſo remote from ſenſual paſſions, that nothing impure durſt approach her preſence. She was a ſtriking pattern of conjugal affection, the will of her huſband being the ſole rule of her actions, redoubling his comforts and dividing his cares. Her deportment

ment was becoming the dignity and dearneſs of the relation; of this the king gave teſtimony by his flowing tears after her death; and by declaring that in all her converſation he diſcovered no fault. She had an excellent underſtanding that qualified her for government. Of this her preſiding in council in times of danger and preſerving the tranquillity of the kingdom, by her prudent and active meaſures, are convincing proofs. Her charity, that celeſtial grace, was like the ſun; nothing within her circuit was hid from its refreſhing heat. A lord propoſed to her a very good work, that was chargeable: ſhe ordered that a hundred pounds ſhould be paid towards it. Some time interpoſing before the receipt of the money, he waited upon the queen, and pleaſantly told her, that intereſt was due for delay of payment; ſhe ordered that fifty pounds more ſhould be given, which was done accordingly; yet her benevolence lies under

der the imputation of two defects, her aſcending the throne of her father, without any ſeeming compunction, and treating her ſiſter as a ſtranger. With reſpect to the firſt, candour will ſuggeſt, that her connection with her father was far inferior to her conjugal and religious obligations; with reſpect to the latter it may be obſerved in extenuation, that family connections are of all others the moſt delicate, and are frequently influenced by ſuch a variety of minute and unknown circumſtances, that an indifferent perſon cannot aſcertain which party is juſtly cenſurable. As an inſtance of her impartial regard to merit of character, we ſhall cite her reply to one of her courtiers, who happened to inveigh againſt the ſeverity of hiſtorians who had treated the memory of ſome princes with great rigour: "that "if theſe princes were ſuch as hiſtorians "repreſented them, they richly deſerved "the treatment they had received, and

"that

" that thoſe who trod in their ſteps might
" naturally expect the ſame fate; for
" truth, though it might be for ſome time
" ſuppreſſed, would moſt certainly in the
" end prevail."

Her redemption of time was the effect of a conſcientious principle. She conſidered her glaſs was continually running, and all the particles of ſand were to be accounted for. In her ſickneſs, patience had its perfect work: ſhe had no fearful apprehenſions about her future ſtate, becauſe her care had been to prepare for her latter end in the beſt time of her life. This mixed cordial drops in the bitterneſs of death; and when this king of terrors drew near, among other things, ſhe was heard to ſay, " I believe I ſhall now ſoon die, and I thank God I have from my youth learned a true doctrine, that repentance is not to be put off to a death-bed."

WILLIAM III.

Anno 1689. THIS prince was of a middle ſtature, ſlender, and, by reaſon of an immature birth, of a delicate conſtitution; being ſubject, from his infancy, to a cough and aſthma. He had an aquiline noſe, a high forehead, ſparkling eyes, and a grave ſolemn aſpect; but, by the aids of temperance and exerciſe, he underwent much fatigue, both in the field and in the cabinet. He was endowed with a retentive memory, and a ſolid judgment; in conſequence of which, his plans, though ſeldom remarkably ſucceſsful, were never ineffectual. He was temperate, juſt, ſincere, religious, and a ſtranger to violent tranſports of paſſion. He was very reſerved, ſpoke but little; and wanted in his manners that pleaſing addreſs, which, among the admirers of Charles the Second, atoned for a number of his vices. He

likewiſe was a ſtranger to that king's inſincerity, and never appeared delighted with thoſe he deſpiſed. The effects of literary ſcience were in him ſupplied by natural ſagacity; and there appeared a ſimplicity, an elevation, an utility, in all the actions of his life. The laſt treaty which William ſigned, was the grand alliance; the laſt act of parliament that he paſſed, was one which completed the ſecurity of the Hanover ſucceſſion; and the laſt meſſage he ſent to parliament, while he was in a manner expiring, was, to recommend an union between two parts of the iſland, which had been long divided. In fortitude and equanimity he rivalled the moſt renowned heroes of antiquity. Being a predeſtinarian, he believed every bullet had its commiſſion; yet in battle his ſpirit was conſtantly reſtrained from acts of raſhneſs, by a deliberate judgment, and a remarkable preſence of mind. He was a zealous aſſertor of the reformed religion, recommending

mending a conformity thereto by his own exemplary conduct. He maintained invariably a regard for the natural rights and liberties of mankind, as rational, ſocial beings. Influenced by this benevolent principle, he exerted the moſt heroic efforts in the deliverance of our anceſtors from the bondage of ſlavery, and commenced champion of the general liberties of Europe, the cauſe of reaſon, of nature, of God, and of man. That the Seven United Provinces did not loſe their liberty by the growing power of France; that this iſland did not ſink into the moſt abject ſlavery; that the Proteſtant religion was not aboliſhed by law in every country in Europe; appears, under God, to be owing to him. To him it was owing that mankind now ſee the ſingular ſpectacle of a monarchy, in which the ſovereign derives a degree of greatneſs and ſecurity from the liberty of his people, which treaſures and arms have not been able to beſtow upon other princes. In few

words,

words, William the Third was a happy inſtrument in the hand of Providence, a good man, an illuſtrious ſovereign, and will ever hold a place among the greateſt princes recorded in the annals of time.

About the year 1702, though his conſtitution was greatly impaired, he endeavoured to conceal the effects of his malady, and to recruit his ſtrength by a regular exerciſe; but on the 21ſt of February, as his Majeſty was riding from Kenſington to Hampton-Court, his horſe fell, by which accident his collar-bone was broke. Being conveyed to Hampton-Court, the fracture was reduced by his own ſurgeon. In the evening, his Majeſty returned to his palace at Kenſington, where he had no ſooner arrived, than it was found that the motion of the carriage had cauſed the ends of the fractured bones to ſeparate; but they were ſoon replaced, under the inſpection of his phyſician. The king appeared to be in a fair way of recovery, till

the firſt of March, when ſymptoms of an inflammation were diſcovered on his knee, which cauſed great weakneſs and exquiſite pain. On the ſeventh of this month the king's lameneſs was ſo far abated, that he was able to walk ſome time in the gallery of his palace at Kenſington; but ſeating himſelf on a couch, he fell aſleep, and was ſeized upon his waking with a ſhivering fit, which was preſently followed by a fever and diarrhœa. Sir Richard Blackmore, and other celebrated phyſicians, attended his Majeſty; but all their endeavours to afford him relief proved ineffectual. During the intervals of his fits, the king ſent for ſeveral noblemen, and ſpake to them about private affairs. Upon the arrival of the earl of Albemarle, he was admitted into the royal preſence. His Majeſty ſaid to him, with unuſual coolneſs, "I draw towards my end." In the evening, he thanked his phyſician for his tenderneſs and care, ſaying, "I am convinced that you,

and

and the other learned men, have done every thing that the art of man could effect, for procuring me relief; but, finding all your efforts muſt prove fruitleſs, I ſubmit to my fate without reluctance." Early in the morning of the tenth, his Majeſty had received the holy ſacrament from the hands of Tenniſon, archbiſhop of Canterbury, and continued in prayer with that prelate, and Dr. Burnet, biſhop of Saliſbury, till about eight o'clock, when he was ſeized with the agonies of death; and ſoon after expired in the arms of Mr. Sewel, one of the pages of the back-ſtairs, who ſupported him as he ſat in his bed.

Thus died, on the 10th of March, William the Third, in the 52d year of his age, and the 14th of his reign. The lords Lexington and Scarborough, who were then in waiting, no ſooner perceived that the king was dead, than they ordered his ſurgeon to take off from his left arm a black ribband, which bound next to his

ſkin a gold locket, containing ſome hairs of the late queen, expreſſing the regard and tender reſpect he had for her memory.

The royal corpſe, after having been opened and embalmed, lay in ſtate at Kenſington; and, on the 12th of April, was depoſited in a vault of Henry the Seventh's chapel in Weſtminſter-abbey. Thus ended the reign of one of the moſt illuſtrious monarchs that ever ſat on the Engliſh throne.

ANNE,

ANNE,

Second Daughter of JAMES II. and QUEEN of ENGLAND.

Anno 1702. IN her perſon, this queen was of the middle ſize, and well proportioned; her face was rather round than oval, her hair of a dark brown, her features regular, her complexion ruddy, her aſpect rather comely than majeſtic, but her preſence very engaging. Her voice was clear and melodious, which appeared particularly in the graceful delivery of her ſpeeches to parliament. Her capacity and learning were not remarkable; but ſhe was a virtuous, juſt, and pious princeſs. In domeſtic life, ſhe was a pattern of conjugal fidelity and affection; in ſocial, ſhe approved herſelf a ſincere friend, and a munificent patroneſs. She was a tender mother, an indulgent miſtreſs, a mild and merciful princeſs. During her reign, both

the church and ſtate experienced a profuſion of royal bounty. While her ſubjects laboured under the burden of an expenſive war, ſhe generouſly aſſiſted them with a conſiderable part of her revenue. She applied the firſt-fruits and tenths, belonging to the crown, to the maintenance of the poor clergy. She promoted the deſign of erecting churches; and gave every encouragement to charity-ſchools, for the education and ſupport of indigent youth. Her political character is ſufficiently marked by the tranſactions of her reign (too copious for this work); I ſhall only ſay, the greateſt part of it was glorious; and while her huſband (the prince of Denmark) lived, the influence of his ſteadineſs made it ſhine with diſtinguiſhed luſtre. The ſame ſplendour might have continued to its cloſe, had ſhe not evinced the ſtrongeſt prepoſſeſſions in favour of the Tories, whom ſhe was taught by her favourites to regard as her true friends, yet who made

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an ill uſe of her confidence, and, at her death, were reviving the perſecutions of former reigns, and throwing every thing into confuſion. At the ſame time this queen imbibed moſt incurable prejudices againſt the Whigs, whom ſhe conſidered as the avowed enemies both of the church and monarchy. To theſe falſe notions was owing her unhappy conduct in reſigning herſelf into the hands of the former party, during the laſt four years of her reign, whereby a moſt ſucceſsful war was terminated by a moſt inglorious peace. Upon the whole, had this queen purſued, uninfluenced, her own good intentions, ſhe might have been ranked among the beſt of ſovereigns.

In the year 1714 the health of the queen was ſo much impaired, that every day was believed to be her laſt. The queen's conſtitution was now entirely deſtroyed, the anxiety of her mind having completed the ruin of her health. The diſſenſions among

her miniſters were arrived at ſuch a height, that, forgetting their duty to her, or regard for their country, they ſeemed to meet in council merely with a view of oppoſing each other. This proved in ſome meaſure the cauſe of her death, for ſhe was heard to declare, that ſhe ſhould never outlive it. The court was at this time in the utmoſt confuſion; and her Majeſty, being no longer able to ſupport the burden of government, ſunk into a ſtate of inſenſibility, and thus found a refuge from her anxiety in lethargic ſlumbers. Every method was tried that the art of healing could beſtow, but in vain: her diſorder gained ground ſo faſt, that her phyſicians deſpaired of her life. Every prudent ſtep was taken, and every neceſſary precaution, for ſecuring the ſucceſſion in the houſe of Hanover. The queen, on the 13th of July, appeared ſomewhat better, roſe from her bed about eight in the morning, and, walking a little about her chamber, caſt her

her eyes on the clock, and continued to gaze upon it for ſome time. One of her ladies in waiting begged to know what ſhe ſaw there more than uſual: to which her Majeſty only anſwered, by turning her eyes upon her with a dying look. Soon after ſhe was ſeized with a fit of an apoplexy, from which ſhe was ſomewhat relieved by the aſſiſtance of Dr. Mead. She continued all night in a ſtate of ſtupefaction; but gave ſome ſigns of life between twelve and one o'clock, and expired a little after ſeven in the morning, on the firſt of Auguſt, in the fiftieth year of her age, and the thirteenth of her reign. By prince George of Denmark her majeſty had ſix children. In her ended the line of Stuarts, whoſe misfortunes and miſconduct ſtand recorded as awful leſſons of inſtruction to all their ſucceſſors.

GEORGE

GEORGE I.

Anno 1714. HE was elector of Brunſwick, and a prince of the houſe of Hanover, and was indebted for his crown, not to hereditary right, but to the election of a free and brave people; a title more honourable to a ſovereign than all the pride of royal anceſtry, or the boaſted claims of conqueſt. This prince was in his perſon plain, in his addreſs ſimple, of a compoſed and grave deportment; but, in his hours of relaxation, familiar, and at times facetious. Before he aſcended the throne of Great Britain, he had juſtly acquired the character of a wiſe politician, a courageous circumſpect general, a juſt and merciful elector. The eſtabliſhment of the electoral dignity in his family was a work which, though begun by his father, was reſerved for him finally to accompliſh. A large acceſſion of territory fell to him by

by his ſucceeding to the dukedom of Zell, by which he became one of the greateſt princes of Germany. The duchies of Bremen and Verden, and the biſhoprick of Oſnaburgh, conſiderably ſtrengthened his intereſt in the empire, and gave an additional weight to the Proteſtant cauſe. He was, indeed, almoſt always attended with good fortune, which was chiefly owing to his prudence and aſſiduity. He aſcended the throne of England with a mind happily diſpoſed to govern his new ſubjects according to the maxims of the Engliſh conſtitution, and the genius of the people. This he ever made the rule of his conduct; while he himſelf appeared intereſted in the liberty and happineſs of his ſubjects. Naturally inclined to juſtice and equity, though abſolute and deſpotic in his hereditary dominions, he ruled with all the lenity and moderation of a limited prince. He conſidered civil and religious liberty as the unalienable right of mankind;

kind; and therefore he indulged it to a people who pleaded no other claim than his known goodneſs and humanity. Poſſeſſed of theſe generous ſentiments, though his acceſſion to the throne enlarged his ſphere of action, it did not alter his plan of conduct. This was uniformly and invariably the ſame, both before and after his advancement to regal dignity. Leſs tenacious of his own prerogative than the rights and privileges of his ſubjects, as he never made any attacks upon the latter, no encroachments were ever made upon the former. The love and affection of his people, he conſidered as the firmeſt ſupport and ſecurity of his throne. Conſcious that, under an arbitrary government, the property of the ſubject is not in more danger than the life of the ſovereign, he wiſely rejected the inſidious advice of thoſe who endeavoured to make their court to him by the profeſſion of an obedience which they could never practiſe,

and

and which has always proved fatal to ſuch kings as have put it to the trial. Thoſe he regarded as his beſt friends, who honeſtly acquainted him with the true principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, and adviſed him to regulate his conduct according to its maxims. To their counſels he prudently liſtened, and invariably adhered, through the whole courſe of his reign. It has been ſaid, that he did not diſtinguiſh himſelf by patronizing the arts and ſciences; yet he founded, in the univerſities of Oxford and Cambridge, two profeſſorſhips, one of modern hiſtory, and the other of modern languages. In a word, he loved his people, made their happineſs the rule of his actions; and it may be affirmed, no prince was ever better qualified to ſway a ſceptre, nor did any one ever exerciſe the virtues of a great and good king with more diſtinguiſhed ability, or more uninterrupted ſucceſs.

His

His Majeſty, not having viſited his German dominions for two years, declared in council his intention of embracing the preſent opportunity to enjoy that pleaſure. On the third of June the king ſet out for Hanover, and, proceeding to Greenwich, embarked on board the Carolina yacht for Holland, where he landed on the 7th. He lay at the little town of Vaert, and two days after arrived, between ten and eleven at night, at Delden, to all appearance in good health. Here he ſupped heartily, and ate part of a melon, which his ſtomach ſeemed not well to digeſt; for, ſetting out the next morning, he had not travelled far before he was troubled with gripings of the cholic; and, ordering the coach to ſtop, complained that he had loſt the uſe of one of his hands. Being come to Linden, he could not eat any thing at dinner; upon which it was judged adviſable to open a vein; and he was blooded, but without any good effect. He was adviſed by his attendants

attendants to remain at Linden; but being anxious to reach his electoral dominions, his Majesty continued his journey, during which he fell into a kind of lethargic dozing.

About 10 at night the king arrived at the palace of his brother the bishop of Osnaburgh, where, his illness increasing, he expired about eleven o'clock the next morning, on Sunday the eleventh of June, leaving the crown of England, and his foreign dominions, to his only son the prince of Wales.

This worthy monarch ascended the throne in the fifty-fourth year of his age, endowed with every quality necessary for governing a great and powerful people. He died in the sixty-eighth year of his age, after a reign of thirteen years.

The king's body was conveyed to Hanover, and buried there among his illustrious ancestors.

During

During this reign a rebellion aroſe in Scotland, and great efforts were made to bring in the Pretender, which, after a great deal of bloodſhed, happily proved fruitleſs. As ſoon as the rebels were ſubdued, the houſe of commons began to think of the moſt effectual way of proſecuting the offenders. They firſt impeached the earls of Derwentwater, Nithiſdale, Carnwath, and Wintoun, and the lords Widdrington, Nairn, and Kenmure. Theſe noblemen, being brought to the bar of the houſe of lords, heard the articles of impeachment read, and were ordered to put in their anſwers in ten days. The impeachments being lodged, the lower houſe ordered a bill to be brought in, to continue the ſuſpenſion of the Habeas Corpus act ſix months longer; then they prepared another to attaint lord John Drummond, the earls of Mar and Linlithgow, and the marquis of Tullibardine. All the lords pleaded guilty except Widdrington, who deſired further time

time to prepare for his defence; and the reſt received ſentence of death. Orders were iſſued for the execution of Derwentwater, Kenmure, and Nithiſdale; the latter effected an eſcape in the apparel of a woman, his mother having contrived to ſupply him with the diſguiſe. Kenmure and Derwentwater were beheaded upon Tower-hill. The earl of Wintoun was brought to trial, and, being found guilty, received ſentence of death. Of the remaining priſoners, a conſiderable number were found guilty, hanged, drawn, and quartered, and among theſe was William Paul, a clergyman, who, in a ſpeech to the populace at the place of execution, declared himſelf "a ſincere and true member of the church of England, but not of the revolution ſchiſmatical church, whoſe biſhops had abandoned the king, and ſhamefully given up their eccleſiaſtical rights, by ſubmitting to the invalid, lay deprivations authorized by the prince of Orange;" yet it

appears in the hiſtory, that this man's fears of death got the better of his reſolution, for he preſented a petition, declaring his ſorrow for his crime, and begged pardon of God, his king, and his country.

GEORGE

GEORGE II.

Anno 1727. THIS wise and good prince was not distinguished by very shining abilities; but his virtues afford sufficient matter for just panegyric. If his natural genius was not the brightest, his general conduct evinces the solidity and extent of his judgment. If his temper was rather warm and impetuous, it never hurried him into measures subversive of his own true interests, or those of his people, to which he inflexibly adhered. He was plain and direct in his intentions, true to his word, steady in his favour and protection to his servants, whom he never willingly changed; and those who immediately attended on his person, grew old with him, or died in their places. In his early part of life, he distinguished himself by his bravery, and was present as a volunteer under the great duke of Marlborough, at the

the battle of Oudenarde, in which he put himſelf at the head of a ſquadron of Hanoverian horſe, ſword in hand, and, fighting with the greateſt intrepidity, had his horſe killed under him. He alſo ſhewed his perſonal courage at the battle of Dettingen. His domeſtic happineſs was for many years complete: he lived with his queen in a felicity ſeldom experienced in the more humble walk of private life. His ſubjects enjoyed a long interval of domeſtic tranquillity till the year 1745, when a rebellion broke out in Scotland (ſimilar to that in the reign of his father George the Firſt, in the year 1715), and, with the bleſſing of Providence, proved in the end equally unſucceſsful, and fruſtrated the attempts made to bring in the Pretender. In the ever-memorable battle of Culloden, in which the rebels were ſubdued (upwards of 1200 being killed in the ſpace of only 40 minutes) by the aſtoniſhing conduct, courage, and bravery of his royal

highneſs

highneſs William duke of Cumberland, the king's youngeſt ſon, whoſe memory will be revered to the lateſt poſterity. From his royal highneſs's courage, which he diſplayed in ſo diſtinguiſhed a manner, together with his prudence, and the exalted love he bore to his country, it ſeems that Providence particularly made uſe of him, as its moſt proper inſtrument in performing this work. He it was who revived the ſpirits of the people by the magnanimity of his own behaviour. He waited with patience, choſe with diſcretion, and moſt happily and glorioufly improved that opportunity, which blaſted the hopes of the rebels, and ſecured to us the poſſeſſion and future proſpect of the wiſeſt and beſt framed conſtitution Europe can boaſt. The vanquiſhed adventurer eſcaped from the field of battle, forded the river Neſs, and with a few horſe retired to Aird, where he held a conference with ſome of his adherents; but finding

his affairs deſperate, he deſired each of them to conſult his own ſafety; after which he aſſumed various diſguiſes, wandering from place to place among the mountains and weſtern iſlands for four months, during which he underwent an amazing ſeries of dangers, hardſhips, and miſeries: at laſt two ſhips ſent on purpoſe from France to the coaſt, took him and about thirty of his followers on board, and landed them near Morlaix, in Britany. Addreſſes were now preſented from all quarters to his majeſty, felicitating him upon the ſucceſs of his arms, the two houſes of parliament having ſet the example: they alſo voted their thanks to his royal highneſs for his great and eminent ſervices; and the commons ſoon after ſettled twenty-five thouſand pounds per annum on him and his male-iſſue. At the ſame time it was reſolved by government, to make examples of ſome of thoſe who had involved their country in ſuch

calamity

calamity and confuſion; the number however as few as poſſible. An act was paſſed for attainting the earls of Kilmarnock and Cromartie, and the lords Balmerino and Lovat were tried, and found guilty. Cromartie was afterwards pardoned as to life, but all his eſtates were confiſcated. On the 18th of Auguſt, Kilmarnock and Balmerino were executed on Tower-hill: the former died with marks of penitence and contrition, but the latter viewed the implements of death with the moſt careleſs air, and ſeemed to glory in his ſufferings. Lovat was not beheaded till the ſpring following. Courts were opened in different parts of the kingdom for the trial of the rebels of inferior rank, fifty of whom were condemned and executed; ſome were pardoned, and the greater number were tranſported to the plantations. In November following, Mr. Ratcliffe, who had been taken in a ſhip bound to Scotland, was arraigned on a former ſen-

tence paſſed againſt him in the year 1716. He refuſed to acknowledge the authority of the court, and pleaded that he was a ſubject of France, honoured with a commiſſion in the ſervice of his moſt chriſtian majeſty. The identity of his perſon being proved, a rule was made for his execution, and on the eighth day of December following he was beheaded, and ſuffered with great ſerenity and compoſure. After an end was put to this rebellion, the reſt of this king's reign was happy to himſelf and his people. Peace extended her wings over this happy iſle; commerce flouriſhed in a very remarkable manner, and riches were continually flowing into the ports of the Britiſh empire; agriculture and manufactures were daily improving, aſſiſted by the wiſe regulations of the parliament, which greatly contributed to make theſe noble acquiſitions. Having baffled the machinations of his enemies to ſubvert the government, through the wiſdom of his councils,

councils, the affection of his people, and the bravery of his ſon, he had the happineſs to ſee the clamours of party in great meaſure extinguiſhed: he ſaw his ſubjects contented at home, and acquiring abroad the greateſt military glory; and he had the ſingular felicity of having a prime miniſter who entered into all his views, and was at the ſame time the favourite of the people. He was well acquainted with the ſyſtem of Germany, and was, during his whole reign, a zealous aſſertor of the liberties of his native country: nor was he leſs acquainted with the true intereſts of the ſeveral princes of Europe; and always oppoſed, to the utmoſt of his abilities, every attempt that tended to ſhake the balance of power. Deſirous not only of keeping, but alſo of enlarging the acquiſitions of his father, he had recourſe to œconomy, by which he was enabled to maintain a conſiderable body of troops in Hanover. He ſurvived ſeveral of his chil-

dren; and died at that period of time, when the terror of his arms, the power of his kingdom, and the wife meaſures of his government, were all raiſed to the higheſt point of proſperity and renown. He has been cenſured as being too fond of money; and in ſome trivial matters this cenſure does not appear to be entirely without foundation; but it never ſhewed itſelf in one rapacious act, or influenced his conduct on any important occaſion; ſo that at his death his private wealth was far inferior to what was expected. He ſhewed a remarkable affection alſo for his native country, and was fond of military pomp; but when the intereſts of England and Hanover were ſeparated, and the war broke out in which Hanover muſt ſuffer much, and could hope for no advantage, he did not heſitate to expoſe his German dominions to almoſt inevitable ruin, rather than to abate of the juſt claims of the Engliſh in America. He was ever more attentive

attentive to the intereſt of his ſubjects, than to his own; manifeſting at the ſame time a uniform regard to the laws of this country, which he never violated; nor did he, in a ſingle inſtance, attempt to demoliſh the barriers of liberty, or to encroach on one privilege of his people.

None of his predeceſſors on the throne of England lived to ſo great an age; few of them enjoyed ſo long and glorious a reign. The king's death was ſudden at his palace at Kenſington, on the 25th of October, 1760, in the 77th year of his age, and the 33d of his reign.

He had riſen at his uſual hour, drank his chocolate, and obſerved to his page, that, the weather being fine, he intended to walk in the gardens. In a few minutes after he had ſignified his intention, and being alone in his chamber, his majeſty was heard to fall on the floor. The noiſe of his fall brought in ſeveral of his attendants, who lifted him on the bed, where,

in a faint voice, he desired the princess Amelia his daughter might be sent for; but before her arrival the good old king expired. The immediate cause of his death is said to have been a rupture of the right ventricle of his heart, which occasioned an instantaneous stoppage of the whole circulation: an unexpected stroke from the king of terrors, which filled the hearts of his subjects with unfeigned sorrow.

An event of this kind is never preceded with any apparent illness; so that it is no wonder his majesty had enjoyed for some time an uncommon degree of strength and health, considering his advanced age; and what is no less extraordinary, he never more perfectly possessed the love of his subjects, than in the last years of his life.

GEORGE

GEORGE III.

Anno 1760. GEORGE the Third, who at the time of his acceſſion was in the 23d year of his age, aſcended the throne of his anceſtors under the moſt promiſing circumſtances. The lords of the council, as ſoon as the death of the late king was notified, aſſembled at Carlton-houſe, and iſſued orders for proclaiming his majeſty, which was accordingly done at the uſual places, and with the accuſtomed ceremony. While the council was ſitting his majeſty arrived from Kew, and addreſſed them in the following terms:

"The loſs the nation and I have ſuſtain-
"ed, by the death of the king my grand-
"father, would have been ſeverely felt at
"any time, but coming at ſo critical a junc-

" ture, and ſo unexpected, it is by many
" circumſtances augmented; and the weight
" now falling on me is much increaſed: I
" feel my own inſufficiency to ſupport it as
" I wiſh; but animated by the tendereſt
" affection for this my native country, and
" depending on the advice, experience, and
" abilities of your lordſhips, and the ſup-
" port and aſſiſtance of every honeſt man,
" I enter with cheerfulneſs into this ardu-
" ous ſituation; and ſhall make it the
" buſineſs of my life to promote, in every
" thing, the glory and happineſs of theſe
" kingdoms; and to preſerve and ſtrengthen
" the conſtitution both in church and ſtate."

I have now brought his preſent majeſty to the throne of his anceſtors, where may he long continue to rule over, and be a bleſſing to a free and generous people.

END OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BRITISH MUSEUM 26 JU88

CON-

CONCLUSION.

ADDRESSED TO OUR BRITISH YOUTHS.

I HAVE now brought this abbreviation of the Hiſtory of England to a concluding period, and I truſt to the ſatisfaction of my readers. It was undertaken chiefly for the inſtruction of a riſing generation (though an agreeable amuſement for thoſe of riper years), and was originally intended to implant in early youth a love of virtue however obſcured, and an abhorrence of vice however dignified under the ſanction of a crown.

I ſhall cloſe the whole with the ſentiments of a very ingenious and elegant writer.

Virtue, which of all excellencies and beauties is the chief and moſt amiable; *that* which is the prop and ornament of hu-

man affairs, which upholds communities, maintains union, friendſhip, and correſpondence among men; *that* by which countries, as well as private families, flouriſh and are happy; and for want of which every thing comely, conſpicuous, great, and worthy, muſt periſh and go to ruin; *that ſingle quality*, thus beneficial to all ſociety, and to mankind in general, is found equally a happineſs and good to each creature in particular; and is *that* by which alone man can be happy, and without which he muſt be miſerable.

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AN

AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING SOME

DISTINGUISHED AND ILLUSTRIOUS CHARACTERS,

SUCH AS

OLIVER CROMWELL, ADMIRAL BLAKE, DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH, KING OF PRUSSIA, VOLTAIRE:

DRAWN FROM

AUTHENTIC RECORDS

OF

UNDENIABLE AUTHORITY.

Intended to ſtimulate the Minds of Youth, not only to admire, but imitate their Virtues, and inſpire them with great and noble Sentiments.

Know then this truth (enough for man to know)
"Virtue alone is happineſs below." POPE.

CHARACTER I.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

THIS great man, notwithſtanding what ſome have ignorantly aſſerted, was very well deſcended; Milton calls his houſe noble and illuſtrious, and father Orleans, in his Hiſtory of the Revolutions of England, expreſſes himſelf thus: "Cromwell was well born, not "to be contemptible, and yet not ſo well "as to be ſuſpected of aſpiring to ſove-"reignty."

The original name of his family was not Cromwell, but Williams. Morgan Williams, ſon and heir of ——— Williams, married the ſiſter of the famous lord Cromwell, who was made earl of Eſſex by king Henry the Eighth. By her he had a ſon named Richard, who was knighted by king

king Henry, and took the name of his uncle Cromwell. He married Frances, daughter and co-heireſs of Sir Thomas Murſyn; and upon the diſſolution of the monaſteries, obtained all the lands that belonged to them in Huntingdonſhire, which amounted to a prodigious value. This Sir Richard Cromwell, at a ſolemn triumph held at Weſtminſter, anno 1540, before king Henry the Eighth, and which was proclaimed in France, Spain, Scotland, and Flanders, overthrew two of the combatants, meſſieurs Palmer and Cuſpey: he had a ſon, Henry, who was knighted by queen Elizabeth in the ſixth year of her reign. This Sir Henry married Joan, daughter and heir of Sir Ralph Warren, and reſided chiefly at Hinchinbrook, where had been a houſe of nuns. He is ſaid to have been a worthy gentleman, that lived in high eſteem both at court and in his country. The father of the protector, Robert Cromwell, eſquire, was ſecond ſon

of

of Sir Henry; there were five more; Sir Oliver was the eldeſt, who had a vaſt eſtate, and after whom his nephew Oliver ſeems to be named: the others were Henry, Philip, Richard, and Ralph. We read in hiſtory of Sir Oliver, that at his houſe at Hinchinbrook, on the acceſſion of king James the Firſt, he made the moſt noble entertainment that ever had been made by a private ſubject in honour of his ſovereign.

But Mr. Robert Cromwell's eſtate was much inferior to his brothers. He had not above 300 l. a year, when his wife, daughter of Sir Richard Steward, brought him a ſon, that was to have at his command the perſons and fortunes of three wealthy nations.

It was on the 25th of April, 1599, that this prodigy was given to the world, at the town of Huntingdon, where his father then inhabited. The accounts we have of his youth are imperfect and unſatisfactory,

tory, for he never diſtinguiſhed himſelf till he was called upon to do it in a public capacity. We only learn that his father took care of his education, ſending him when grown up to Sidney-college in Cambridge, where he diſcovered more inclination to an active than a ſpeculative life: though there are proofs ſufficient that his advances in learning were not deſpicable, ſince they made him maſter of a genteel ſtyle. It was owing perhaps to his turn for action, that we read of his running into ſome exceſſes, when he retired from Cambridge after his father's death; which occaſioned his mother to enter him at Lincoln's Inn. The ſtudy of the law however did not long agree with him; and having 500 l. a year left him by his maternal uncle, Sir Richard Steward, over and above what he inherited from his father, he fixed entirely in the country, growing as remarkably ſober and religious as he had been before vicious

vicious and extravagant. For ſome time after his reformation he adhered to the church of England, but at laſt fell in with the Puritans. The grievances of the people were at this time many and great, occaſioned by the encroachments of the court and clergy on almoſt every branch of civil and religious liberty. Cromwell's engagement on the Puritan ſide, on his firſt coming into the houſe of commons, made him a warm ſtickler for the country's intereſt. He was one of the committee of religion in king Charles's third parliament, and made himſelf taken notice of on this occaſion by the people as a perſon well affected to the legal conſtitution of his country: but what made him the moſt popular was his oppoſition to an undertaking, in which the king himſelf was concerned, for draining the fens in Lincolnſhire and the iſle of Ely.

I now come to his character as lord protector. We are told by all parties, that he

he had an abſolute command over all his paſſions and affections, ſo that he could ſuit his carriage to all companies and occaſions, while himſelf ſounding the opinions of others, artfully concealed his own; and he applied himſelf ſo induſtriouſly to the buſineſs of the commonwealth, and diſcovered ſuch abilities for the management of it, that his greateſt enemies acknowledged he was not unworthy of the government, if his way to it had been juſt and innocent. In a word, we have this character of him by lord Clarendon, who profeſſedly hated his memory. "He muſt "have had a wonderful underſtanding in "the natures and humours of men, and "as great a dexterity in applying them, "who, from a private and obſcure birth "(though of a good family), without in-"tereſt or eſtate, alliance, or friendſhip, "could raiſe himſelf to ſuch a height, and "compound and knead ſuch oppoſite and "contradictory tempers, humours, and "intereſts,

" intereſts, into a conſiſtence that con-
" tributed to his deſigns and to their own
" deſtruction; whilſt himſelf grew inſen-
" ſibly powerful enough to cut off thoſe by
" whom he had climbed, in the inſtant
" that they projected to demoliſh their
" own building."

Though Cromwell was ambitious to a very high degree, yet he had at the ſame time a paſſionate regard for the public good. It is certain he did more things for the honour and advantage of the nation, notwithſtanding his own precarious ſituation, than had been done for whole ages in the preceding times. Some of them were laboured at long before to no effect, and being dropped upon the reſtoration, have been ſince reſumed and carried on with great difficulty; to inſtance only in two, the union of the three kingdoms, and the reformation of the laws. King James had wiſhed from his firſt coming to England to cement an union between

tween South and North Britain: neither he nor his ſon could ever accompliſh it: but Cromwell united not only England and Scotland, but brought in Ireland alſo. And then, as to the laws, he out-vied the beſt of our kings that had gone before him, and every one ſince, till his preſent moſt ſacred majeſty.

If Cromwell united three kingdoms in one, he firſt conquered two of thoſe kingdoms. Ireland had long been reckoned a demeſne of the crown of England, but had never been ſo ſubdued as to render the natives tractable and docile. They were then at open war with the Engliſh parliament, and had got poſſeſſion of all the garriſons but one or two. But Cromwell ſoon reduced them to obedience, and put them out of a capacity of being ever ſo formidable ſince. He did the ſame by the hardy Scots, and even took their impregnable caſtle of Edinburgh, which, they ſay, never before had ſubmitted to a conqueror.

queror. With all theſe extraordinary qualities, and this wonderful ſeries of ſucceſs, need we think it ſtrange that he was the admiration of the age in which he lived, and that thoſe who hated him moſt even praiſed him in their invectives; that Dryden, Waller, Sprat, and other fine poets, who afterwards inſulted his memory, in order to pay their court to the riſing ſun, found themſelves inſpired with his praiſe, while his actions were freſh in their minds, and could not help paying that tribute to his remains, which the Muſes never beſtow voluntarily but on the greateſt of men, the heroes and patrons of mankind?

In a word, he was as great in counſel as in fortitude; he weighed the hazards of war as if he feared them, he went through them as if he deſpiſed them. Before danger wary, in it undaunted. Every imputation of raſhneſs, every ſuſpicion of incapacity or negligence, he prevented by his

his action, his preſence of mind, and his attention to every circumſtance.

I ſhall conclude with perhaps as remarkable a ſtory, as is any where to be met with; and the reflections on it are equally honourable to Cromwell as to that great patriot Mr. Pulteney, who told it, who was neither afraid or aſhamed to introduce the conduct (before a Britiſh parliament) of one we call an Uſurper, as a pattern to legal kings and modern miniſters.

In the hiſtory of Cromwell's time, we are told by this great patriot, that an Engliſh merchant ſhip was taken in the chops of the Channel and carried into St. Maloes, and there confiſcated upon ſome groundleſs pretence. As ſoon as the maſter of the ſhip, who was an honeſt Quaker, got home, he preſented a petition to the protector in council, ſetting forth his caſe, and praying for redreſs. Upon hearing the petition, the protector told his council he would take that affair upon

himſelf, and ordered the man to attend him next morning. He examined him ſtrictly as to all the circumſtances of the caſe, and finding by his anſwers that he was a plain honeſt man, and that he had been concerned in no unlawful trade, he aſked him, if he would go to Paris with a letter. The man anſwered he would; well then, ſays the protector, prepare for your journey, and come to me to-morrow morning; next morning he gave him a letter to cardinal Mazarine, and told him he muſt ſtay but three days for an anſwer. The anſwer I mean, ſays he, is the full value of what you might have made of your ſhip and cargo: and tell the cardinal, that if it is not paid you in three days, you have expreſs orders from me to return home. The honeſt blunt Quaker, we may ſuppoſe, followed his inſtructions to a tittle; but the cardinal, according to the manner of miniſters, when they are any way preſſed, began to ſhuffle,

therefore the Quaker returned as he was bid. As ſoon as the protector ſaw him, he aſked, "Well, friend, have you got your "money?" And upon the man's anſwering, he had not, the protector told him, "Then leave your direction with my "ſecretary, and you ſhall ſoon hear "from me." Upon this occaſion that great man did not ſtay to negotiate, or to explain, by long, tedious memorials, the reaſonableneſs of his demand. No, though there was a French miniſter reſiding here, he did not ſo much as acquaint him with the ſtory, but immediately ſent a man of war or two to the Channel, with orders to ſeize every French ſhip they could meet with. Accordingly they returned in a few days with two or three French prizes, which the protector ordered to be immediately ſold, and out of the produce, he paid the Quaker what he demanded for the ſhip and cargo. Then he ſent for the French miniſter, gave him

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an account of what had happened, and told him there was a balance, which, if he pleaſed, ſhould be paid to him, to the end that he might deliver it to thoſe of his countrymen, who were the owners of the French ſhips, that had been taken and ſold.

This was Oliver Cromwell's manner of negotiating; this was the method he took for obtaining reparation: and what was the conſequence? It produced no war between the two nations. No, it made the French government terribly afraid of giving him the leaſt offence, and while he lived they took ſpecial care that no injury ſhould be done to any ſubjects of Great Britain. This ſhews that Oliver Cromwell had a genius, and a capacity for government: and, however unjuſtly he acquired his power, it is certain that this nation was as much reſpected abroad, and flouriſhed as much at home, under his

government, as it ever did under any government.

I could make many comments on the times, but it is foreign to my preſent purpoſe; ſuffice it to ſay, I ſincerely wiſh that thoſe who have now the direction of our negotiations abroad would aſſume, if poſſible, a little of the ſpirit and courage of Oliver Cromwell.

To conclude, it appears from numberleſs inſtances, that as no man practiſed the arts of government with more policy than Cromwell, ſo he became more formidable both at home and abroad than moſt princes that had ever ſat upon the Engliſh throne. It was ſaid that cardinal Mazarine would change countenance whenever he heard him named; ſo that it paſſed into a proverb in France, "that "he was not ſo much afraid of the devil "as Oliver Cromwell." And this authority Cromwell kept up to the laſt: for after a long chain of ſucceſſes, he died in the

the peaceful poſſeſſion of the ſovereign power, though diſguiſed under another name, but left it to a ſon, who little reſembled him; one that had neither heart nor abilities to keep it. The protector was buried among our kings with a royal pomp, and his death condoled by the greateſt princes and ſtates in Chriſtendom in ſolemn embaſſies to his ſon. It has been obſerved, that as the ides of March were equally fortunate and fatal to Julius Cæſar, ſo was the third of September to Cromwell, for on that day he won the two great victories of Dunbar and Worceſter, in 1650 and 1651, and on that day, 1658, he died.

His aſhes in a peaceful urn ſhall reſt,
His name a great example ſtands to ſhew,
How ſtrangely high endeavours may be bleſt,
Where piety and valour jointly go.

DRYDEN.

CHARACTER II.

ADMIRAL BLAKE.

BLAKE, after having deſtroyed two of the richeſt fleets belonging to the Spaniards, ſailed for England, but falling ſick of a fever, he died in the 59th year of his age, juſt as the fleet was entering into Plymouth-ſound; where he paſſionately inquired for the land, but found his own element the more proper bed of honour. His ſucceſſes and victories were amazing, and almoſt incredible. He had a public funeral juſtly beſtowed upon him, and the honour of being interred in Henry the Seventh's chapel. That great hiſtorian lord Clarendon ſays, "he was the "firſt man that declined the old track, "and made it manifeſt, that the naval "ſcience might be attained in leſs time "than was imagined; and deſpiſed thoſe "rules,

" rules, which had been long in practice,
" to keep his ſhips and his men out of
" danger, which had been held in former
" times a point of great ability and cir-
" cumſpection: as if the principal art re-
" quiſite in the captain of a ſhip, had
" been to be ſure to come home ſafe
" again. He was the firſt man who
" brought ſhips to contemn caſtles on
" ſhore, which had been thought ever very
" formidable, and were diſcovered by him
" to make a noiſe only, and to fright
" thoſe who could rarely be hurt by them.
" He was the firſt that infuſed that pro-
" portion of courage into the ſeamen, by
" making them ſee by experience, what
" mighty things they could do, if they
" were reſolved; and taught them to fight
" in fire as well as upon water: and though
" he hath been very well imitated and
" followed, he was the firſt that gave the
" example of that kind of naval courage,
" and bold and reſolute atchievements:"

A very proper ſervant for ſuch a maſter as Cromwell.

Blake had a very great regard to the honour of his country, and the Engliſh dominion of the ſeas. One inſtance of his care to preſerve this honour, mentioned by biſhop Burnet, I cannot omit. He ſays, that Blake happening to be at Malaga with the fleet, before Cromwell made war upon Spain, ſome of the ſeamen, going aſhore, met the hoſt, as it was carrying about, and not only refuſed to pay any honour to it, but laughed at thoſe that did. Whereupon one of the prieſts ſtirred up the people to reſent this affront; and ſo they fell upon them, and beat them ſeverely. The ſeamen returning to their ſhip, and complaining of the uſage they had met with, Blake immediately diſpatched a trumpeter to the viceroy, to demand the prieſt who had been the chief occaſion of it: to which the viceroy returned this anſwer, "That he had no authority over the prieſts, and

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ſo could not diſpoſe of him." But Blake ſent him word again, "that he would not inquire who had power to ſend the prieſt to him; but if he were not ſent within three hours, he would burn their town." They, being unable to reſiſt, ſent the prieſt to him; who juſtifying himſelf upon the rude behaviour of the ſeamen, Blake anſwered, "That if he had ſent a complaint of it to him, he would have puniſhed them ſeverely, ſince he would not ſuffer his men to inſult the eſtabliſhed religion of any place; but he took it ill that he ſet on the Spaniards to do it; for he would have all the world know, that an Engliſhman was only to be puniſhed by an Engliſhman;" and then civilly treated the prieſt, and diſmiſſed him, being ſatisfied he had him at his mercy.

Cromwell was exceedingly pleaſed with this; and read the letters in council, with

great ſatisfaction, telling them, " he hoped he ſhould make the name of an Engliſhman as great as ever that of a Roman had been."

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CHARACTER III.

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

JOHN CHURCHILL, duke of Marlborough, and prince of the empire, was the ſecond ſon of Sir Winſton Churchill, knight, of Wotton-Baſſet, in the county of Wilts, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Drake, baronet, of Aſhe, in Devonſhire. The family of the Churchills is very ancient; and we have memorials of it in Normandy, before the conqueſt; and in England, from that period down to the birth of our hero, which happened at Aſhe aforeſaid on the 24th of June, 1650. Mr. Mackay ſays, in his Memoirs, it was the duke of York's love to Mrs. Arabella Churchill, the duke's ſiſter, that firſt brought young Mr. Churchill to court; and the beauty of his own perſon, joined to his good addreſs, ſo gained on the du-

cheſs of Cleveland, then miſtreſs to king Charles the Second, that ſhe effectually eſtabliſhed him there.

All writers agree, that he had a liberal and polite education, under the immediate care of his father, and the tuition of a clergyman of the church of England, who ſo grounded him in the doctrines and principles of that church, that he ever after ſacrificed to it all other intereſts, when they came in competition with it. It was not long before Mr. Churchill diſcovered his martial inclination; and it is ſaid, he took an opportunity one day to mention it to his royal maſter (as he was then page of honour), and to aſk him for a pair of colours in the guards; which he obtained, and went a captain in the ſervice of France. He was a great favourite with the prince of Condé and marſhal de Turenne, the two greateſt generals of the age. He was a volunteer in every difficult enterprize, and ſcarce was there any danger which his conduct

conduct did not ſurmount. M. Rouſſet ſays, that a certain French lieutenant-colonel being commanded to defend a paſs, he was ſo diſheartened at the approach of a detachment of Dutch, that he immediately quitted his poſt. Advice being brought to M. de Turenne, he turned to a general officer who ſtood near him, "I'll lay you (ſays he) a ſupper and a dozen bottles of the beſt Florence, that my handſome Engliſhman regains the paſs with half the number of men that other fellow loſt it." Captain Churchill, who was then in hearing, immediately undertook the enterpriſe, won the marſhal his wager, and gained the applauſe of the whole army: he ſoon after had a regiment given him.

In the year 1683 he was created a peer; but the viciſſitudes of his fortune were very numerous, as may be ſeen in his hiſtory at large; which I ſhall not enter into, as I ſat down not to write his life, but his general character only. The late prince of Vaudemont, being at Loo, and ſpeaking

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to the king of the reputation of his generals, delivered himſelf thus: "Kirk has fire, Lanier judgment, Mackay experience, Colcheſter courage, but there is ſomething in the earl of Marlborough which I cannot expreſs; there ſeem united in him all thoſe qualities which diſtinguiſh the others; and I have loſt all my ſkill in phyſiognomy, which never yet deceived me, if any ſubject your Majeſty has will ever attain to ſo high a pitch of military glory, as the combination of ſublime perfections in that nobleman will ſome time or other exalt him to." The king ſmiled in approbation of what the prince had ſaid; and in anſwer told him, that all his characters were very juſt; and that he made no queſtion but the earl of Marlborough would do his part to anſwer his highneſs's prediction. King William, on his death-bed, expreſſed his confidence in the earl; and this monarch, when dying, recommended him to the favour of queen Anne, who was to ſucceed him to the crown, as the fitteſt perſon

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in all her dominions to conduct her armies, or preſide in her councils; as being a man of a cool head, and a warm heart. She immediately, as ſoon as ſhe was ſeated on the throne, ſent him embaſſador extraordinary to the States; he was ſoon after created a duke. The victory of Blenheim (on the 13th of Auguſt, 1704) will be an eternal monument of his fame. His imperial majeſty ordered a pillar to be erected at Hochſtedt, to perpetuate the memory of this glorious battle, and his own gratitude. Another monument of this ſignal victory was erected at Blenheim.

In December 1706, a bill came from the Lords, for an act for ſettling the honours and dignities of John duke of Marlborough upon his poſterity; and annexing the honour and manor of Woodſtock, and the houſe of Blenheim, to go along with the ſaid honours; was read three times by the houſe of commons, and paſſed, *nemine contradicente*; and the very next day

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it received the royal aſſent, when the queen told both houſes of parliament, that the particular notice they had taken of the eminent ſervices of the duke of Marlborough was very agreeable to her, and ſhe did not doubt would be ſo to the whole kingdom.

As I would not willingly omit any circumſtance that could tend to illuſtrate the character of this great general, it would be unpardonable not to inſert the character given by Voltaire of this matchleſs hero. "This man (ſays Voltaire), who had never laid ſiege to a town which he did not take, nor fought a battle which he did not gain, was at St. James's a perfect courtier, the head of a party in parliament, and in foreign countries the moſt able negotiator of his time. He did France as much miſchief by his underſtanding as by his arms; and Fagel, ſecretary of the States General, a man of very great merit, has been heard to ſay, that more than once, when their high

high mightineſſes had reſolved to oppoſe what the duke of Marlborough was to lay before them, the duke came, ſpoke to them in French (in which language he expreſſed himſelf ill), and brought them all into his ſentiments. In conjunction with prince Eugene, the companion of his victories, and Heinſius, the grand penſioner of Holland, he ſupported all the weight of the enterprizes of the allies againſt France. He knew that Charles was exaſperated againſt the empire and the emperor; that he was ſecretly ſolicited by the French; and that if this conqueror ſhould join himſelf to Louis the Fourteenth, the allies would be undone. Upon his firſt addreſs to the king of Sweden, he told him in French, that he ſhould think himſelf happy, if he could be taught, under his command, what he yet wanted to know in the art of war. He had then a private audience of an hour long, in which the king ſpoke in German, and the duke in French.

French. The duke, who was never in haſte to make propoſitions, and had learned by a long courſe of experience the art of penetrating into the ſentiments of mankind, and finding out the ſecret connection between their inmoſt thoughts and their actions, geſtures, and diſcourſes, fixed his eyes attentively upon the king. When he ſpoke to him of war in general, he thought he perceived in his majeſty a natural averſion towards France; and obſerved, he was pleaſed when he talked of the conqueſts of the allies. He mentioned the czar to him; and took notice, that his eyes always kindled at his name, notwithſtanding the moderation of the conference; and he farther remarked that a map of Muſcovy lay before him on the table. He wanted no more to determine him in his judgment, that the real deſign of the king of Sweden, and his ſole ambition, were, to dethrone the czar, as he had already done the king of Poland." The duke of Marlborough,

tough, in this and other inſtances, gave ſurpriſing examples of his addreſs, perſonal influence, and great knowledge of mankind, if he could dive thus deeply into the ſentiments of the king of Sweden, in the manner M. Voltaire relates.

It is difficult to draw the character of a man, reſpecting whom prejudice has ſtill much to ſay; nor can any thing be added to what may be every day heard from the mouths either of his friends or his enemies. But ſo many indiſputable great qualities were conſpicuous in the duke of Marlborough, that all agree he was one of the firſt men of the age.

In perſon, he was tall and handſome, of a noble and graceful appearance, with a very obliging addreſs. He had a wonderful preſence of mind, ſo as hardly ever to be diſcompoſed. Bred up in a court, he knew the art of living in it beyond any man. He had no great literature, but was bleſſed with a very clear head, a penetra-

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tion that ſcarce any thing could eſcape, and a ſolid and ſound judgment. As he ſeldom failed of ſucceſs in any thing he undertook, ſo he was never daunted for want of it, whenever diſappointed. Equally able both to contrive and execute, he was always an overmatch to the generals that were ſent againſt him. Laborious and vigilant, he truſted nothing to others that became himſelf to perform. The duke of Vendome, by much the greateſt general France then had, could only boaſt that he was but once beaten in two campaigns, and that he protracted, but could not raiſe the ſiege of Liſle. This indeed was a great matter, when he had to deal with the duke of Marlborough, whoſe march to the Danube, and reduction of Bavaria, was his own contrivance, and executed with a bravery hardly to be paralleled in hiſtory.

In a word, it would be needleſs to add any farther idea of him, beſides what may be

be drawn from his immortal actions, the moſt inconteſtable characteriſtics of true merit: nor can theſe be ſummed up with greater ſtrength, and at the ſame time ſimplicity, than in the monumental inſcription engraved on the pillar in Blenheim park.

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CHARACTER IV.

KING OF PRUSSIA.

Tranſlated from the French of M. Maupertuis.

IF the firſt of theſe two ſucceeding pictures inclines to panegyric, and the ſecond to ſatire, they are neither of them the leſs juſt.

The moſt faithful and ſcrupulous hiſtorian would be the beſt panegyriſt of Frederic, king of Pruſſia. I pretend to be neither; I only attempt the outlines of his character, which even cotemporary jealouſy, envy, and malignity, are forced to admire; and which more impartial poſterity, if it can believe, will almoſt adore. By the mere natural ſtrength and ſuperiority of his genius, without experience, he broke out at once a general and a hero:

he diſtinguiſhed with preciſion, what inferior minds never diſcover at all, the difference between great difficulties and impoſſibilities; and, being never diſcouraged by the former, has often ſeemed to execute the latter. Indefatigably laborious and active, coolly intrepid in action, he diſcerns as by intuition, ſeizes with rapidity, and improves with ſkill, the ſhort, favourable, and often deciſive moments of battle. Modeſt and magnanimous after victory, he becomes the generous protector of his ſubdued and captive enemies. Reſolute and undejected in misfortunes, he has ariſen ſuperior to diſtreſſes, and ſtruggled with difficulties, which no courage, no conſtancy, but his own, would have reſiſted, nor could have ſurmounted. But as he cannot always command the ſucceſs which he always deſerves, he may perhaps be obliged to yield at laſt to the ſuperior numbers of almoſt all Europe combined againſt him: their legions may perhaps conquer, but his

his virtues muſt triumph. As a king, he is a man, a citizen, a legiſlator, and a patriot. His own extenſive mind forms all his plans of government, undebaſed by ſelfiſh miniſterial intereſts and miſrepreſentations; juſtice and humanity are his only miniſters. In his own dominions, he has reformed the law, and reduced it to equity by a code of his own digeſting; he has thrown cavil out of the ſhifting and wavering ſcales of juſtice, and poized them equally to all. Indulgent to the various errors of the human mind, becauſe tainted with ſo few himſelf, he has eſtabliſhed univerſal toleration, that deciſive characteriſtic of true religion, natural juſtice, ſocial benevolence, and even good policy. He equally abhors the guilt of making martyrs, and the folly of making hypocrites. Greatly above all narrow local prejudices, he has invited and engaged, by a general indiſcriminating naturalization, people of all nations to ſettle in his dominions. He

encourages

encourages and rewards the induſtrious, he cheriſhes and honours the learned; and man, as man, whenever oppreſſed by civil, or perſecuted by eccleſiaſtical tyranny, finds a ſure refuge in his ſentiments of juſtice and humanity, which the purple robe has not been able to ſmother.

A philoſopher, undazzled with the ſplendour of the heroic part of his character, may perhaps inquire after the milder and ſocial virtues of humanity, and ſeek for the man. He will find both the man and the philoſopher too in Frederic, unallayed by the king, and unſullied by the warrior: a patron of all liberal arts and ſciences, and a model of moſt; in a more particular manner cultivating, adorning, and adorned by the belles lettres. His early and firſt attempt was a refutation of the impious ſyſtem of Machiavel, that celebrated profeſſor of political iniquity, nobly conſcious that he might venture to give the world that public pledge of his

future virtue. His memoirs, intended to ſerve only as materials for a future hiſtory of the houſe of Brandenburg, are ſuch as muſt neceſſarily defeat his own purpoſe, unleſs he will write the hiſtory too himſelf. There are alſo ſpecimens enough of his poetical genius, to ſhew what he might be as a poet, were he not ſomething greater and better. Neither the toils of war, nor the cares of government, engroſs his whole time, but he enjoys a conſiderable part of it in familiar and eaſy converſation with his equals: there the king is unknown, and, what is more, unfelt. Merit is the only diſtinction in which his unaſſiſted, but confeſſed and decided ſuperiority conſiſts; but this flatters a mind formed like his much more delicately, than the always caſual, and often undeſerved ſuperiority of rank and birth. But, not to ſwell an eſſay towards a character, to the bulk of a finiſhed character, ſtill leſs to that of a hiſtory, I will conclude this ſketch with this obſervation:

Many

Many a private man might make a good king; but where is the king, who could make a good private man, except Frederic?

CHARACTER V.

VOLTAIRE.

Generally believed to have been written by the King of Pruſſia.

MOnſieur de Voltaire was below the ſtature of a tall man, or, in other words, he was a little above the middle ſize: he was extremely thin, and of an aduſt temperament, hot and atrabilious; his viſage was meagre, his aſpect ardent and penetrating, and there was a malignant quickneſs in his eye. The ſame fire that animates his works, appeared in his actions, which were lively even to abſurdity. He was a kind of meteor, perpetually coming and going with a quick motion, and a ſparkling light that dazzled our eyes. A man thus conſtituted cannot fail

of

of being a valetudinarian; the blade eats away the ſcabbard. Gay by complexion, grave by regimen, open without frankneſs, politic without refinement, ſociable without friends; he knows the world, and he forgets it. In the morning he was Ariſtippus, and Diogenes at night; he loved grandeur, and he deſpiſed the great. With his ſuperiors, his carriage was eaſy; but with his equals, conſtrained. He was firſt polite, then cold, then diſguſting. He loved the court, yet made himſelf weary of it. He had ſenſibility without connections, and was voluptuous without paſſion. He was attached to nothing by choice, but to every thing by inconſtancy. As he reaſoned without principle, his reaſon had its fits, like the folly of others. He had a clear head, and a corrupt heart: he thought of every thing, and treated every thing with deriſion. He was a libertine, without a conſtitution for pleaſure; and he knew how to moralize, without morality. His vanity was exceſſive, but his avarice

was

was yet greater than his vanity; he therefore wrote leſs for reputation than money, for which he might be ſaid both to hunger and thirſt. He was in haſte to work, that he might be in haſte to live: he was made to enjoy, and he determined only to hoard. Such was the man, and ſuch was the author. There is no other poet in the world, whoſe verſes coſt him ſo little labour; but this facility of compoſition hurt him, becauſe he abuſed it: as there was but little for labour to ſupply, he was content that little ſhould be wanting, and therefore almoſt all his pieces are unfiniſhed. But though he was an eaſy, and ingenious, and elegant writer of poetry, yet his principal excellence would be hiſtory, if he made fewer reflections, and drew no parallels, in both of which, however, he had been ſometimes very happy. In ſome of his works he has imitated the manner of Bayle, of whom, even in his cenſure of him, he exhibited a copy. It has long been ſaid,

that for a writer to be without paſſion, and without prejudice, he muſt have had neither religion nor country; and in this reſpect Monſ. Voltaire made great advances towards perfection. He cannot be accuſed of having been a partiſan to his nation; he appeared, on the contrary, to be infected with a ſpecies of madneſs ſomewhat like that of old men, who are always extolling the time paſt, and bitterly complaining of the preſent. Voltaire was always diſſatisfied with his own country, and laviſh in the praiſe of thoſe that were a thouſand leagues off. As to religion, he was in that reſpect utterly undetermined; and he would be certainly the neutral and impartial being ſo much deſired for an author, but for a little leaven of Anti-Janſeniſm which appears ſomewhat too plainly diſtinguiſhed in his works. Voltaire had much foreign and much French literature, nor was he deficient in that mixed erudition which is ſo much in faſhion.

He

He was a politician, a naturaliſt, a geometrician, or whatever elſe he pleaſed; but he was always ſuperficial, becauſe he was not able to be deep: he could not, however, have flouriſhed as he did upon theſe ſubjects, without great ingenuity. His taſte was rather delicate than juſt: he was an ingenious ſatiriſt, a bad critic, and a dabbler in the abſtracted ſciences. Imagination was his element; and yet, ſtrange as it is, he had no invention. He was reproached with continually paſſing from one extreme to another: at one time a philanthropiſt, then a cynic; at another, an exceſſive encomiaſt, then an outrageous ſatiriſt.

In one word, Voltaire would fain be an extraordinary man, and an extraordinary man he moſt certainly was.

FINIS.

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